

**STUDIES
IN
SKANDA PURANA**

PART III, VOL. 2.

PILGRIMAGE

A.B.L. AWASTHI

Digitized by Sarayu Foundation Trust, Deini and eGangotri
Studies in Skanda Purana-present the data derived from the exploration of the oceanic text of the Skanda Mahapurana relating to Geography, History, Polity, Society, Economic life, Religion and Philosophy and Tirthas, Iconography and Fine Arts, are treated for the first time in these studies based on the Skanda Purana.

Skanda Purana in its present form, represents the Age of Imperial Kanauj and Struggle for the Empire, roughly from 9th century A.D. to the 12th century A.D., when it was struggling hard against the alien invaders. The economic prosperity of Karmabhumi-Bharata was based on the geographical factors and natural resources of the country viz. the fertile land with mountains, forests and rivers, full of different types of trees and animals, as well as metals like gold and silver.

The material prosperity led to the enrichments of our culture reflected in the grand temples. Temples were set up for the deity of one's own devotion. Pancayatana-worship based on the tenets of Saiva, Vaisnava, Saura, Ganesa, and Sakta Cults was dominant phase of religious life in this epoch. Different ascetic-orders, theistic and atheistic, too, marked their stamps on the socio-religious life of the country. We find references to Matsyendra Natha and Mahamuni Ramanuja of Dravida. Mahamati Ramanuja advocated Sattvikibhakti. Among the different schools of Bhakti, Krsna-cult and Rama-Bhakti became popular. The former advocated the Prama-Bhakti expounded by Narada and Sandilya. Rama-cult had already displayed its vigour against Jainism (and Buddhism) in the courts of kings like Ama-Nagabhata II of the Pratihara dynasty of Kanayakubja.

Popularity and prominence of Suryabhakti is exhibited by a large number of solar shrines set up through out the country.

Jainism was also dominant as evidenced by the influence of Suris upon the courts and kings like that of Kumarapala, who denounced Ramabhakti at the instance of Indra-Suri, a Jain ascetic of great celebrity.

Buddhism survived Buddha, a jatila, was worshipped in the form of Visnu. It reflects the spirit of reconciliation. Similarly Skanda refers to conflicts between Saivas and Vaisnavas, but this rivalry between the two sects ultimately led to the syncretism which was advocated by Siva himself (Skanda?).

Skanda refers to famous six philosophical schools of Sankya-yoga, Purva-mimamsa and Uttara-mimamsa (Vedanta) as well as Nyaya and Vaisesika. It also refers to the Philosophy of Love, associated with the life of Krsna.

STUDIES IN SKANDA PURĀNA
Part Three - Vol.II
Pilgrimage

STUDIES IN SKANDA PURĀNA

**Part Three - Vol. II
Pilgrimage**

(Holy Spots & Temples)

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INTRODUCTION

ATMA-NIVEDANAM

तमेव चाद्यं पुरुष प्रपदे

I have the satisfaction and spiritual solace - *dharme tattvārtha darśanām* - that I have been able to finish - somehow the Skanda Mahāpurāṇa, which I was blessed by Viśvanātha, Annapūrnā and Vāsudeva to embrace Devasenapati Skanda - the deity of the Skanda Purāṇa.

R.C. Hazra could not handle this voluminous text; H.C. Raychaudhury, has, deserted it after his 'note on Vastrāpatha Māhāmatmya' (1929) and Dr. R.S. Tripathi also could not read completely the story of Bhoja (Bhoja Vṛttānta). My teacher, Prof. C.D. Chatterji, did not touch it, though he was also allured by it. It was in 1952, when late Prof. V.S. Agrawal asked me: "Will you like to study the Skanda Purāṇa?"

'Yes I will', it was my answer. I began earnestly reading and writing. The thesis was complete in 1955. But it was delayed deliberately. It was in the classical section of I.C.O, in the year 1964 (January), Mr. A.S. Gupta read a paper: "problems of interpreting the Purāṇas. I asked him:

"Have you applied these principles in your studies?" He referred to the Varāha Purāṇa with vague information. So I asked again:

"What is the importance of Dharma in the Varāha Purāṇa? He was again vague. I asked him 'Don't speculate'.

Prof. Kane, then, rose with his remarks. "There are vague generalisations in the Purāṇas, for example, we find reference to Nadir Shah in the Skanda Purāṇa". I asked:

"There is nothing vague in the Purāṇas. There is no reference to Nadir Shah in the Skanda Purāṇa. Let me know as to where do you find that reference? He came up to my seat and said: मैं वैसे ही कह गया था

Such is the state of speculations and generalisations, which fill up the pages of 'Historical and Cultural Studies in the Purāṇas'.

Purāṇa represents 'Purāṇa Puruṣa' Purātana-Puruṣa- Puruṣottama, and Purāṇas glorify Him:

Purāṇeṣu Purāṇātmā
Nārāyaṇah sarvam idam Purānam
Maheśvarah sarvam idam Purānam.
पारं परं ब्रह्मपारपारः
परः पराणां परपारपारः
He is cause of Sarga etc.:
सगादिकृत् हरिः
Pañcalakṣaṇah Purānah

Lakṣaṇas indicate Lakṣya, which is Puruṣottama glorified in the Ādi Purāṇa (Brahma Purāṇa) which stupefied mind and blurred vision of Wilson failed to observe. Hazra did not study the complete texts of the Purāṇas and established tentative chronology only on the study of certain Purāṇic passages and chapters.

He failed to observe society and state particularly from the 4th century A.D. to 1000 A.D. He blindly followed Vincent Smith to say that India remained immune from foreign invasions for about 500 years after the Hūṇa invasions. Dr. V.S. Pathak also held the same view in his thesis. (AHI)

Arab conquest of Sind and its occupation with horrors of persecutions, mass-killings of sages and carrying away of women by force stirred the national thinkers. They met at Ujjayinī and appointed Pratihāras as defender of Dvāravatī and Prabhāsa. Thus the gods regained their lost splendour. Almost all the Purāṇas declare: पूर्वे किराता यस्यान्ते पश्चिमे यवनास्तथा Western India suffered most in the deluge.

The contribution of tīrthas and temples to the growth of intellectual and spiritual culture (*nīḥśreyas*) - the part of Dharma and the abhyudaya - material prosperity, an other aspect of Dharma which went together, hand in hand, has not been assessed by the scholars of religious history and art-historians.

These have been glorified in the Mahābhārata and in the Purāṇas. There are eighteen Mahā Purāṇas and similar number of the Upa-Purāṇas which contain Tīrtha-māhātmayas. The Ādi Purāṇa (No.1) named Brahma Purāṇa glorifies the temples of Orissa, which have survived the iconoclastic fire and fury. It contains the longest list of tīrthas. But the Skanda-Purāṇa is the most comprehensive and conspicuous Tīrtha-Samhitā, which com-

prises seven Mūla-samhitās - Maheśvara Khaṇḍa, (I), Vaiṣṇava Khaṇḍa (II), Brhma Khaṇḍa (III), Kāśī Khaṇḍa (IV), Revā Khaṇḍa (V), Nāgara Khaṇḍa (VI) and Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa (VII).

In the earlier part of this work (Vol. III, Part I) we have discussed the tīrthas of the five sections, i.e. from Kedāra (Khaṇḍa) to Revā (Khaṇḍa). Now let us move from this sacred region towards Dvārakā, abode of Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa. Now let us bid adieu, farewell, goodbye to the deity (Śiva) of the *Revā-Sāgara-Saṅgama* (pāpaharam tīrtham Revā-sāgara - saṅgamam) - a great and glorious place (parama-sthānam Narmadodhi-saṅgamam), (papaharam tīrtham Revā-sāgara - saṅgamam), where stood world famous seaport of Bṛguukṣetra, Bharu Kaccha or Barygaza of the Greeks, modern Broach. Let us move fast, life is short and human life is a rare gift bestowed upon us, Kṛṣṇa, exhorts:

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव
दानेषु यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।
अत्येति तत्सर्वभिं विदित्वा
योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥

Tīrtha was our body; mind is cooled; recitation of sacred books and mantras stimulate Bhakti, Company of saints binds us with One who is our saviour.

When we turn our face towards Dvārakānātha, we also have the vision of Lord Someśvara:

स धूर्जटिजटाजूटो जायतां विजयाय वः ।
यत्रैकपलितश्रांति करोत्पद्मापि जाह्नवी ॥

The grand Prāśādarāja (Meru type in its structure), Somanātha challenges mortal iconoclasts. Someśvara is immortal and we are too Amrita provided we meditate:

चिदानन्दरूपो शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहं

These two sections of the Skanda Purana namely the Nāgara Khaṇḍa and Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa are important works glorifying the tīrthas or holy places of Western India at a time when it stood on the verge of collapse. The heretics - the Pāśandas (Buddhists and Jains) as well as Yavanas - Mlechhas - knocked the door. Later on the Yavanas got their colony (*yavana deśa*) established in Sind. The neighbouring Dharmakṣetras of the Narmadā-Vana, Dharmāranya (Mahī valley), Raivataka-Vana, Arbudāranya and hills of Pāriyātra and Sahya provided āśraya to Hindu culture.

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There, in these rakṣāranya, sages compiled the names of tīrthas and temples, many of which have been destroyed, their names are preserved in Nagarā Khanda (VI) and Prabhāsa Khanda (VII) of the Skanda Mahā Purāṇa which glorify the sacred land of king Bharata named Bhāratavarṣa as an Ārya Karmabhūmi (Aryadeśa) and the exalted Rṣideśa called Kaumārikā Dvīpa - the land of Kumāra (Skanda) and Kaumārikā devī, who is always *tejavatī* bestowing kānti to people who love the land:

जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी

The gods aspire to be born in this Punya-bhūmi, which is also called *Kūrma-mūrti*

भारतवर्षस्य कर्मपुण्यभूमित्वेन श्रेष्ठत्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
कूर्मरूपेण देशस्य भारतस्य देवभूमित्वं प्रदर्शितम् ॥

Bhāratavarṣa denoted, in the past, a confederacy of nine parts called Navadvīpas or Nava-bhedas and the ninth division or the unit was called Bhārata-dvīpa or Kumāri-dvīpa.

In the 'navam' region called Bhārata there is *Prabhāsa-* kṣetra abode of Śiva (Someśvara-Somanātha), where Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa- Puruṣottama left his human body which He had assumed to make this land Dharmabhūmi by destroying *adhārmika* people and princes of Āsuric nature.

Prabhāsa thus symbolises the unity of Śiva and Viṣṇu in the personality of Mihira-Bhoja-*Prabhāsa* styled Ādivarāha who rescued the earth.

Prabhāsa kṣetra, called Āditīrtha received for the first time *prabhā* or divine-lustre:

प्रकृष्टं भानुरथवा भासितो विश्वकर्मण ।
यत्र साक्षात् प्रभावातो जातः प्राभासिकं ततः ॥

Here, were reverberating sounds of *Veda-dhvani*- prakṛṣṭā Bhārati Brāhmī viproktā śrūyate sadā *prabhāsam* tena kīrtitam.

Sarasvatī is also known to have adorned this kṣetra, Bhārati-devī delivered *vādavāgni* (fire) to the ocean here.

The material prosperity of Saurāstra combined with the intellectual culture and spiritual splendour of this region led to the establishment of

thousands of temples and hermitages on the holy places situated on the river banks or on ponds and lakes or near sacred wells.

The sacred region was visited by the Pāñḍavas and other saints, sages as well as divine beings and Devarsi Nārada.

The exalted personalities of late Sardar Patel - the great patriot and illustrious son of Bhāratī - Dr. K.M. Munshi - a great historian and administrator had revived the glory of Prabhāsa (Somanatha).

We find in these two sections of the Skanda Purāṇa description of tīrthas and temples as well as Āśramas and sages - the Munis, Ṛsis and learned Brhmaṇas practising different religious rites - snāna, dāna, japa, tapa and Dhyāna etc. Thus these sections are the valuable source of Paurāṇic Dharma (cf. St. Sk. P., Pt. II & IV).

Recently a few works dealing with charity (or gifts) have appeared. The learned scholars have drifted away in the currents of foreign ideas - foreign to the tenets of Dāna dharma which has been held dear to all class of people from the Ḍgvedic age (cf. Dānastutis) to our own times.

There is vast material in this oceanic text and I have been trying to follow the 'samāsa' dharma. Somehow I have been able to present, before the world of scholars, glimpses of Brāhmaṇī Bhāratī. In my career I have been cheered and maintained to stand on his support by my teacher Prof. B.N. Puri, who taught me in undergraduate classes and then, raised to apex of D. Litt. degree on the studies in the Varāha Purāṇa. I have been enjoying his filial affection. May God give him long life to bless me.

An eminent archaeologist Dr. (Prof.) R.N. Mehta of Baroda has been studying ancient sites of Mahīśāvara-saṅgama (Cambay) and Nagara Khanḍa very assiduously and patiently. Bhāratī likes her sons to explore her. He had laid the foundations Purāṇic archaeology.

I am satisfied and happy, too, when I find that I have done my job to best efforts, in presenting before the world - world ignorant of the glory of Skanda Purāṇa which discusses like a modern parliament:

कथं मूळसमाकीर्णे देशोऽयं द्विजसत्तम् ।

एतदाचक्षव मां ब्रह्मन् मार्कण्डेय महामते ।

Bhoja-Vṛttānta exhibits vital changes in rājanaya (diplomacy).

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In the end I offer my respects to my teacher Prof. B.N. Puri, who kept me cheerful and calm.

Many saints and sages have been very *kṛpālu* to me. They are the moving tīrthas - centres of satām dharma-salutations to Jagadguru Kṛṣṇa:

उपदिष्टं सुसूक्ष्मार्थं शास्त्रं तेन धीमता

He observes:

परमानन्दमाप्नोति यत्र कामोऽवसीयते

Bhag. XI.15.17 (ii)

One attains supreme bliss, when all desires cease for good.

तस्मै नमः श्री पुरुषोत्तमाय

A.B.L. Awasthi

PILGRIMAGE - AN INTRODUCTION

जन्मूनां नरजन्मदुर्लभमतः पुंस्त्वं ततो विप्रता ।
तस्माद् वैदिकधर्ममार्गपरता विद्वत्त्वमस्मात्परम् ॥ 1

1

Among all created beings, a human birth is indeed rare, much more difficult it is to utilise the human faculties (kāya = body, vāk = speech, and manas or mind) for the development of sāttvika attitude in life stimulating the spiritual life based on the svādhyāya-yoga, which characterises vipratā or Brāhmaṇyam devoted to tapas:

विविक्तदेश आसीनो विरागो विजितेन्द्रियः ।
भावयेदेकमात्मानं तमनन्तमनन्यधीः ॥

Seated in the sylvan solitude detached from the worldly life, full of pain and false happiness, one should meditate upon Ātman. Such meditation in a solitary place, in a forest or in a hill-cave or on a river bank, is called Tīrtha-sevā. Epics and the Purāṇas lay special stress on Mānasa-tīrthas.² Sacred bath is held to be very important and Mānasa-bath is styled Ātmabodha (mānasam tu-ātmavedanam) and yoga is the meditation upon Iśvara (Yoga-Viṣṇu-Vicintanam). This is called Ātmatīrtha:

आत्मतीर्थमिति ख्यातं सेवितं ब्रह्मवादिभिः ।
मनशुचिकरं पुंसां नित्यं तत् स्नानमाचरेत् ॥

Tīrtha-dharma (pilgrimage) was one of the religious institutions. Such exalted personalities like Paraśurāma, Pāṇḍavas, Vidura as well as Vyāsa, Vālmiki, Nārada, Balarāma and Arjuna had performed pilgrimage. Bhoja I, the great ruler of Kānyakubja Mahādeśa, was prepared even to abdicate his throne in favour of going on pilgrimage.³

Tīrtha and Tīrtha-Dharma

When Bhoja I was preparing himself to go on pilgrimage, he asked his preceptor, to describe as to what he should do so that his tīrtha-yātrā

1. Śaṅkara, Ātmabodha, 1.

2. Garuḍa P.I. 81. 22-23.

3. SK. VII. 11.10. 14-16; VII.11.11. 2-3.

might become meritorious. He asked:

नराणां पुण्यदा यात्रा कथयस्व कथं भवेत् ।
 किं ग्राह्यं किं च मोक्षव्यं किं देयं किं न दीयते ॥
 तीर्थोपवासः स्नानं च संध्यास्नानविधिकमः ।
 पूजा निद्रा जपो रात्रौ सर्वं संक्षेपतो वद ॥²

The above query shows that a pilgrim has to live a life of discipline (samyama). He has to observe the rules of 'do' and 'do not do' (vidhi and nisedha). His preceptor, the sage Sārasvata by name, describes the '*yātrā-vidhi*:

नृपयात्राविधिं वक्ष्ये त्वमेकाग्रमनाः शृणु ।
 बृहस्पतिबलं गृह्य सूर्यं संतर्प्य चोत्तमम् ॥
 वामतः पृष्ठतः सर्वं वृत्वा संशोध्य वासरम् ॥
 चन्द्रलग्नं ग्रहांज्ञात्वा बलिष्ठञ्चन्मराशितः ।
 शकुनं च शुभं लब्ध्वा प्रस्थातव्यं नृपैर्नृप ॥
 तीर्थं सदैव गन्तव्यं सर्वे मासाश्च शोभनाः ॥
 तिथयश्चोत्तमाः सर्वाः स्नानदानार्चनादिषु ॥

Sk. VII.ii.11. 4-7

For a king it was essential to follow good and auspicious stars. But for others all the months (except the rainy season) and all the days as well as dates were fit for the performance of pilgrimage, and acts of charity.

"Tīrtha-cult is a unique byproduct of Indian culture. Rivers, mountains shrines and holy spots on the banks of rivers have been sanctified by tradition and association and a visit to these places has been considered for centuries as a paramount duty of a Hindu". The Padma Purāṇa commends pilgrimage as an act of great merits.³ In the course of pilgrimage a pilgrim meets pious people, he takes bath in sacred tīrthas - river or a pond etc., and he listens to the recitation of religious books like Purāṇas.⁴ All these facts and forces inspire piety in his mind.⁵

Satām saṅgo mahāpuṇyo-bahuksēma-pradāyakah. The Bhāgavata

-
4. *Ibid.*, VII.ii.11.2(ii)-3.
 5. Padm. IV. 17.63-74.
 6. *Ibid.*, I.62.24: सद्भिः सह वसेद्धीमान् सत्तीर्थं स्नानमाचरेत् ।
 7. *Ibid.* II.32.14 (ii). कुर्यादेव सदालापं सच्छाङ्गं शृणुयान्नः ॥

Pilgrimage — An Introduction

9

P. refers to Mahat-sevā-devotion to saints and sages) as Mukti-dvāra - a passage to the liberation (mahat-sevām dvāram ahur vimukteh).⁸ The Padma Purāṇa also praises services and devotion to Mahātmās (mahātmā-sevā or Sādhu-sevā).⁹

The origin and importance of the tīrtha-dharma can be traced in the Rgvedic hymns which glorify 'Sapta-sindhavaḥ' and other rivers in the 'Nidi-stuti'. 'Imāṁ me Gange-Yamune' denotes the sacred Antarvedī region. The Padma P. eulogises 'Sapta-Sindhavaḥ' (sindhavaḥ sapta puryākhyā sarvasthāḥ kṣitimaṇḍale).¹⁰ Sāyaṇa has held 'sapta-sindhah' of the Rgveda as Gaṅgādyah, which are the seven currents of the Gaṅgā eulogised in the epics and the Purāṇas. These seven currents of the Gaṅgā viz., Sindhu, Cakṣu, Sītā, Alakanandā, Hlādīnī, Pāvāni and Nalīnī over the entire Bhāratavarṣa or Jambūdvīpa.

IMPORTANCE OF PILGRIMAGE

शृणु ध्वं कथयिष्येऽहं तीर्थानि विविधानि च ।
कथितानि पुराणेषु मुनिभिर्ब्रह्मावादिभिः ॥
यत्र स्नानं जपो होमः श्राद्धदानादिकं कृतम् ।
एकैकशो मुनिश्रेष्ठाः पुनात्याससमं कुलम् ॥

Kurma P. ii. 342-3

Pilgrimage was also an important religious practice, which was recognised by the Purāṇas as an important religious institution.¹¹ It is believed to be an act of piety leading to heavenly bliss.¹² It is stated to be an axe, which destroys the tree, that is sin (tīrtham pāpa-vṛkṣakutthārakam).¹³ But a person, who goes on pilgrimage with purity of mind indifferent to sinful acts and worldly attachments, is relieved of sin.¹⁴ It, thus, points to the nature of pilgrimage as Prāyaścitta i.e. a religious act to atone for sin. Arjuna's pilgrimage¹⁵ was such an act of piety. An act of salutation by the creator Brahmā to the presiding deities of all the tīrthas shows the respect paid to this religious institution.¹⁶ Brahmā observes:

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8. Bhagavata P. V. 5.2.
 9. Padm. II. 86. 29-40
 10. Padm. II. 39-51.
 11. Kūrma, I. 30.10 (ii).
 12. Skanda, V. iii. 72.61-62.
 13. *Ibid.*, II. i. 15.45.
 14. Varaha, CCX. 39.
 15. Skanda, I.ii.1.7-8.
 16. *Ibid.*, I.ii. 58.9-11.

तीर्थानां दर्शनं श्रेयः स्पर्शनं स्नानमेव च ।
 १७ कीर्तनं स्मरणं चापि न स्यात् पुण्यं बना परम् ॥ ७ १७

Thus, fortunate are those, who serve tīrthas by means of different acts of piety. The pilgrimage of the Pāṇḍavas is also referred to in the Skanda Purāṇa.¹⁸

Tīrtha is also defined as a means or a device like a boat or a ship, by means of which one can go across this vast ocean that is world:

saṁsārābdher pārasya taraṇe tīrtham iṣyate¹⁹

Life in this world is, in itself, a tīrthayātrā which, by virtue of pious acts, helps us in making human life fruitful. "Pilgrimage to sacred places forms an important item of the spiritual discipline of the people of almost all religions in the world. The followers of every religion look upon certain places as specially holy and it is the ambition of their life to visit those places at least once in their lifetime.²⁰ Thus a tīrtha represents the force imbued with piety and purity of thought, which relieves a person of his sin and guilt (tarati pāpādikarṇ yasmāt).

SANCTITY OF WATER AND BATH

Water was sacred and its sanctity was object of veneration. The sage Viśvāmitra asked Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa to offer their salutations to the Saṅgama of the Sarayū and the Gaṅgā.²¹ Sītā offered here adorations to the Yamunā.²² The great tank excavated at Śringaverapura (of the Rāmāyanic fame) by Dr. B.B. Lal and Shri K.N. Dikshit also exhibits the sanctity of water.

Water represents unmanifest (avyakta) Mahā-Viṣṇu and water is the abode. He sleeps there and so He is styled Nārāyaṇa. Rivers, Seas as well as ponds represent His Body; (sarit-samudrāṁ-s ca Hareḥ śarīram),²³

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- 17. *Ibid.*, I. ii. 58.12.
 - 18. *Skanda*, V.iii. 2.10.
 - 19. Jain Ādi Purāṇa, 4.8(i).
 - 20. Cultural Heritage of India, Vol.III, p.154.
 - 21. VR., I. 24. 10-11.
 - 22. *Ibid.*, II.55. 19-21.
 - 23. *Bhāgavata P.*, XI. 2.41 (ii).

worthy of adoration.

GREAT BATH

The existence of the Great Bath at Mohenjodara brought to light by the archaeological excavations proves the sanctity of water and religious bath i.e. snānam according to its prescribed code (vidhi). The Bhagavad-Gitā also upholds the sanctity of snānam:

Yāvan-artha-udapāne sarvataḥ samplutdake |
Tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu Brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ || ²⁴

ŚAṄKARA COMMENTS

"Udām udakam pibanty asmin ityudapānam jalāśayah tasminn udapāne bhūmau sarvatra vidyamāna-vāpi-kūpa-taṭāka-puṣkariṇī-nada-nadyādau puṇya-tīrthe snāna-dāna-arcanādi-kriyayā sādhya-manorthah..... sidhyati. sarvataḥ samplutodaka sarvataḥ samplutodakah samudraḥ tasminneva śnāna dāna-arcanādi. kriyayā labhyamānah puṇyarūpo' rthas tāvān eva. Gaṅgādipuṇya-tīrthesu tatra tatra pṛthak pṛthak kriyamāṇa-snānādi kriyālabhya-māna-puṇya-viśeṣaiḥ sidhyati. Śate-pañcāśan-nyāyena paricchinna-jalānām Gaṅgadīnām samudre' antarbhāvat".²⁵

Thus the above reference to the sacred bath in the seas, rivers, ponds and wells shows the importance of pilgrimage.²⁶ Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva Himself performed such pilgrimages to sacred ponds, rivers and seas.²⁷ Nārāyaṇa sleeps in the waters (yasy-āmbhasi śayanasya) and the Creator is born of the lotus springing from His naval.²⁸ The former Jalasāyi again maintains the sanctity of the water and the latter's association with puṣkara, a sacred place of great fame. Matsya-rūpa (fish incarnation) of the Bhagavān Viṣṇu is also associated with the sanctity of water.

24. Sri-mad-Bhagavad-Gitā, II.46.
25. Sri-mad-Bhagavad-Gitā, Commentary by Śrī Śaṅkarānanda, p. 98.
26. Viṣṇu Purāṇa, VI.8.29. There is reference to 'Arṇava' (ocean) as a tīrtha which represents the sea near Koṇārka marked by the famous tīrtha called Sāvitri-pada.
27. Bhāgavata, X.34. 1-4. Here, the Bhāgavata P. refers to 'Deva-yātrā' of Kṛṣṇa in the company of Gopas viz., Nanda and Sunanda etc. They went to the Ambikāvana, where they took bath in the river Sarasvati and worshipped the Lord Pasupati (Śiva) and the goddess Ambikā. They also gave gifts to Brāhmaṇas.
28. Bhāgavata, I. 3.2.

PILGRIMAGE - A STIMULUS TO BHAKTI

Tīrthānugamanāṁ puṇyāṁ yajñebhyo pi viśisyate Matsya P.III.15

While discussing the good of the human beings and the means to realise it, the Bhāgavata Purāṇa tells us that by resorting to holy places one comes in contact with the enlightened devotees called mahātmās, who stimulate the sense of piety by means of their learned discourses. Thus devotees are in position to realise God-head by serving these mahatmas, who look like tīrthas helping the people in crossing the turbulent ocean of birth and death.²⁹ Thus puṇya-tīrtha-niṣevanāṁ³⁰ has its unique importance in the religious life of human civilisation; as pilgrimage stimulates piety.

From the story of pilgrimages performed by saintly persons like Vidura we know that a person going on pilgrimage used to perform many religious rites viz.,

- (i) Visiting of holy shrines;
- (ii) Life of renunciation i.e. negation of visayas or worldly pleasures and devotion to sattvika way of life i.e. -
 - (a) vivikta-vṛtti, solitary life of meditation in peace far from madding crowd and
 - (b) living on pure food such as fruits etc. dropped from trees.
 - (c) bathing in sacred waters, early in the morning;
 - (d) sleeping on the ground;
 - (e) living like an avadhūta (an ascetic); and
 - (f) observing the sacred vows dear to God,³¹ (thus observing Brahmacarya-vrata opposed to kāma-sukha).

Pilgrimage played very important role in the making of Ancient Indian heritage. The entire country, from Setu in the South to Kedāra in the North, is studded with tīrthas. These are stated to be three and a half crore in number,³² comprising Kṣetras, rivers, mountains, and tanks etc.³³ Every spot sanctified by Maharsis, as well as trees and rivers is considered sacred.³⁴ We find detailed lists of tīrthas in the Purāṇas viz., Brahmā,

29. Bhāgavata, I.2.5-22.

30. Ibid., I.2.16(ii).

31. 'Bhāgavata, III.1.18-19.

32. S. VII.iii.1.4.

33. Ibid., VII.iii. 1.5.

34. Ibid., VII.iii. 63. 2-3.

Pilgrimage — An Introduction 13

Vāmana, Padma, Varāha, Kūrma, Bhāgavata, Garuḍa and Agni etc. Mahābhārata-list of tīrthas is most exhaustive. We find Arjuna, Balarāma and others going on long tours of pilgrimage. Skanda also refers to Arjuna's pilgrimage. But the most important and interesting account of tīrthas based, not on fancy, but on pilgrimage and personal observations, is given at the end of the Revā Khaṇḍa (Chaps. 230-232). This is styled *Narmadā-Caritam*, which places 400 tīrthas on both the sides of the Narmada, including 35 sāringamas. It represents a garland of tīrthas picked from both the banks of the river from Oṅkāra Kṣetra to its confluence with the sea. This Tīrtha-gumpha, (Tīrtha-Stabaka or Tīrtha-Kadamba) needs thorough archaeological exploration to assess the proper value of Narmadā-culture.

Pilgrimage³⁵ along with its merits,³⁶ is glorified. It stimulates virtue.³⁷ Skanda refers to the tīrthas of Jambūdvīpa.³⁸ Many holy spots were also situated across the seas (pāre ksire).³⁹ There were many tīrthas situated in Pātāla.⁴⁰ Kaṭāha placed in Pātāla was a celebrated tīrtha.⁴¹ Pātāla-loka represents 'the countries of seas' (ef Itsing) i.e. Dvīpāntara.

SKANDA PURĀNA - A TĪRTHA-SĀMHITĀ

Modern scholars did not realise the importance of tīrthas and their legacy to Indian life, culture, art and thought. Tīrthas, temples and tapovanas played very important role in the national life of Bhārata, particularly in the expansion of Indian culture outside India. In the age of Kali, Kali the Mleccha like 'Kāla-yavana' (Black-yavana) or Kamsa the tyrant, wanted to destroy the roots of Hindu culture and civilisation.⁴²

When the iconoclastic fury and fanaticism of alien invaders was destroying the temples at the hands of Garjanakas (Gajas-Guzz Turks) and Lumpādhipa (the king of Lumpa or Lampāka i.e. Lamghan), tapovanas became Rakṣāranyas, places of shelter for national patriots.

It was, hence, in the fitness of things, to preserve at least the names

35. SK., II. iii. 1.5.

36. *Ibid.*, II. viii. 2.32.

37. *Ibid.*, VII. iii. 59.4-5.

38. *Ibid.*, VII. iii. 60.9.

39. Indian Nationalism, Vol.I, p. 135.

40. SK., VII. i. 23.118.

41. *Ibid.*, VII. i. 10.56.

42. Bhāgavata P. X. 5.30-42.

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of such sacred places.

Historians have also not recognised a school of thinkers styled Paurāṇikas, who instilled a new spirit in their works and their only aim was to preserve Dharma and Dharmāraṇyas.

They prepared lists of tīrthas as well as Māhātmyas of kṣetras (great centres of intellectual and spiritual culture). During the age of the Pratihāra rulers, particularly during the age of Ādīvarāha (Mihirabhoja) Kānyakubja is mentioned as a Mahādeśa (a great empire) as well as a Mahākṣetra. Historians did not feel the change. Kanyāvana-the great forest around Kānyakubja - comprised many forest - centres and among these Tapovanas, Bīthoor (Brahmāvarta, near Kanpur) called Utpalāraṇya is a celebrated place of national freedom. Under the supervision of such enlightened persons like Lakṣmīdhara, the minister for Peace and War, during the reign of Govinda - Candra, compilation of the fundamentals of ancient Indian culture was done. (cf Kṛtyakalpataru, 14 vols.)

The Skanda Purāṇa is the monumental work of this very age and from the beginning to end, it is the compilation of 'adbhuta kathāḥ', 'sat-kathāḥ' and 'divya-kathāḥ', which inspired many poets and authors to portray the country and culture in its glorifying colours. But Saṁskrit scholars of today did not listen to the divine songs sung by poets like Bhavabhūti, and Harṣa Misra (Naiṣadha), etc.

The Skanda Purāṇa begins with the glorification of Kedāra Khanḍa (I-i) and it ends with the glorification of Dvārāka (VII.iv). Thus, from the beginning to end the thread of sanctity is moving around the country focussing the spiritual and intellectual light on the famous kṣetras of Badarī (II.iii), Mathurā (II.vi), Ayodhyā (II.viii), Purusottama Kṣetra (Utkala or Orissa, Jagannātha Puri), Setu (III.i), Kāśi (IV), Avanti and Narmadā-Valley (V), Saurāṣṭra-Kathiawad, and Gujrat (VI and VII) as well as Ābu (VII.iii) and South India (I-iii and II.i). Thus according to this scheme of the Skanda Purāṇa, the entire Bhārata-Kṣetra was a Tīrtha.

Samudragupta and Candragupta second had established their sway over the islands of South and South-East Asia. Samudragupta had received the presents (Upāyana) of Nāga-Kāṇyas. During the period of the Pallavas and the Colas, the cultural relations between South India and the Malaya Peninsula became very intimate. According to the Skanda Purāṇa the sacred hill of the Venkatācala became 'Mecca' of the Hindus living in Dvīpāntara. They offered their salutations from thousands of miles away looking with devotion to the God of the Venkatācala.

ARUNĀCALA LIST OF ŚAIVA SHRINES

History of Śaivism in ancient India cannot be said to be complete without the study of Liṅga-shrines mentioned in the kedāra khaṇḍa (I-i) and Arunācala Māhātmya, Kāśī khaṇḍa, Avanti khaṇḍa (cf. St. Sk. Vol.III.i.) as well as the Nāgara Khaṇḍa (VI) and the Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa (VII) to be dealt with in this volume.

The Arunācala list of the Śiva Kṣetras also takes us to Dvīpas (islands) situated near the Southern Sea (Samudra-pārśvesu itare dvi-peṣu)⁴³ i.e. Dvīpāntara.

It also refers to Śiva Kṣetras of Mānasopānta-Pradeśa⁴⁴ (Kailāsa-Mānasarovara Kṣetra).

There are several lists of the famous tīrthas and kṣetras of Bhāratavarṣa and similarly we get the lists of tīrthas as well as temples set up there dedicated to various deities - Śiva, Śakti, Sūrya, etc. under various names. All these facts go to show the importance of pilgrimage which is a part of the religious life of the Hindus, Buddhists and Jains.

BHĀRATA VARŚA - AN EXALTED TĪRTHA

Jāmbave Bhāratam varṣam tīrtham trailokya-viśrutam
Karmabhūmir yataḥ putra tasmāt tīrtham tad ucyate⁴⁵

While discussing the 'Hindu Pilgrimage and Vedic Sacrifice', Dr. Jacob Ensink of the University of Groningen quotes the above verse and interprets the word *Karmabhumi* as 'a land fit for the performance of the rites',⁴⁶ in his attempt to show that 'pilgrimage and sacrifice are at par'.⁴⁷ He supports his view that "Among the Vedic rites the sacrifices to the ancestors probably were the first to become connected with the cult of bathing places".⁴⁸

43. Sk. I.iii. u. 2.9.

44. *Ibid.*, I. iii u. 2.16 (ii).

45. Brahma P., I.

46. Sternbach Felicitation Volume (=St.B.V. Vol.) Part I (Akhil Bhāratīya Samskrīt Parishad, Lucknow, 1979), p.106.

47. *Ibid.*, p.114.

48. St.B.F., Vol.I, p.106.

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He has quoted the two verses from the Brahma Purāṇa (70.20f.),⁴⁹ whereas the Purāṇa discusses the classification of tīrthas (Brahma P., 70.16f.) and he has detached these verses without quoting Brahma P.70.16-19. Let us quote the whole text:

तपसो यज्ञदानानां तीर्थानां पावनं स्मृतम् ।
सर्वं श्रुतं मया त्वत्तो जगद्योने जगत्पते ॥ २

Here in the above verse tapa, yajña (sacrifices), and dānadharmā (gifts and charity) and tīrthas are mentioned to be four important religious practices. But we get its variant reading:

तपसो यज्ञदानानां तीर्थसेवनमुत्तमम् ॥ १

50

This shows that pilgrimage is the best among the above mentioned religious practices. The purāṇic text runs thus:

समोपेता महाभागा हृष्टपुष्टजनाकुलाः ।
वसन्ति भारते वर्षे युगान्यत्र महामुने ॥
कृतं त्रेता द्वापरं च कलिश्चाप्यत्र न क्वचित् ।
तपस्तप्यन्ति यतयो जुह्वते चात्र यज्ज्वनः ।
दानानि चात्र दीयन्ते परलोकार्थमादरात् ॥
पुरुषैर्यज्ञपुरुषो जम्बूद्वीपे सदेज्यते ।
यज्ञैर्यज्ञमयो विष्णुरन्यद्वीपेषु चान्यथा ॥
अत्रापि भारतं श्रेष्ठं जम्बूद्वीपे महामुने ।
यतो हि कर्मभूरेषा यतोऽन्या भोगभूमयः ॥ २

51

Here Karmabhūmi is distinguished from 'bhogabhūmayaḥ' i.e. lands other than Bhārata are 'bhogabhūmis'. The concept of Karma and the life of 'bhoga' alone indicate the importance of karma. The same Purāṇa runs:

अत्र जन्मसहस्राणां सहस्रैरपि सन्तम ।
कदाचिलभते जन्मुर्मानुष्यं पुण्यसंचयात् ॥ ३

52

The entire corpus of śāstras uphold that human life is a very rare gift

- 49. Brahma P. (HSS Edn.), 70.14(i).
- 50. Ibid. (HSS. Edn.), Foot-note 1 ().
- 51. Ibid., 19.19(ii)-23.
- 52. Ibid. 19.24.

specially bestowed upon a created being and mānuṣyam in this karmabhūmi or Bhārata bhūmi is aspired by Gods with great longing:

53

गायत्ति देवा किल गीतकानि
धन्यास्तु ये भारतभूमिभागे ।
स्वर्गापवर्गस्पद हेतुभूते
भवन्ति भूयः पुरुषा मनुष्याः ॥ 1 53

Thus, Karmabhūmi is the cause (*hetuh*) for the attainment of Svarga (heaven) and apavarga (mokṣa).

Karmabhūmir iyāṁ svargam apavargañ ca. icchatā.⁵⁴

Hence, Karmas are also broadly classified into two classes:

- (i) karmas leading to heaven (i.e. Vedic sacrifices); and
- (ii) karmas leading to mokṣa.

This distinction in the performance of religious rites is very old tradition rooted in the Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads. The Brahma Purāṇa itself adds:

55

कर्मण्यसंकल्पिततत्कलानि
संन्यस्य विष्णौ परमात्मरूपे
अवाप्य तां कर्ममहीमनन्ते
तस्मिन्लये ये त्वमलाः प्रयान्ति ॥ 3

It is clearly stated here that naīskarmyam or asaṁkalpita-tatphalāni karmāṇī saṁ-nyasya viṣṇau - Paramātmarūpe amalāḥ tasmin (Paramātmarūpe) layāṁ prayānti.

For the realisation of tīrtha-phala, life of strict discipline (discipline of senses i.e. dama) and mental peace (śama) as well as the life of enlightenment by adherence to Vidyā, tapas and kīrti (of pious life) is essential:

यस्य हस्तौ च पादौ च मनश्चैव सुसंयतम् ।
विद्या तपश्च कीर्तिश्च स तीर्थफलमश्रुते ॥ 1

53. Brahma P., 19.25.

54. *Ibid.*, 19.2(i).

55. *Ibid.*, p. 25.2.

This life is far above the life of ritualism and this stage of one's attainment of the true vision of Puruṣa, Paramātman and Purusottama makes him Buddhimān⁵⁷ or Buddha.

Every limb of our body, then, becomes a tīrtha itself i.e. pure and inspiring others to become pure:

मनो विशुद्धं पुरुषस्य तीर्थं
वाचां तथा चेन्द्रियनिग्रहश्च ।
एतानि तीर्थानि शरीरजानि ।
स्वर्गस्य मार्गं प्रतिबोधयन्ति ॥ 3

There are references to karmāṇi which a man or a woman must do during his whole life, but without attachment to tīrtha-phala.⁵⁸

There was a strong protest and revolt against Vedic sacrifices.⁵⁹ Iṣṭāprtam⁶⁰ comprises two-fold work viz., -

- (i) performance of sacrifices; and
- (ii) construction of well, tank, temple etc. for public good.

It is also not commended. The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, an old text of its class, observes:

तपःश्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये शान्ता विद्वांसो भैक्ष्यचर्या चरन्तः ।
सूर्यद्वारेण ते विरजाः प्रयान्ति यत्रामृतः स पुरुषो ह्यव्याप्तामा ॥ 1

In the above verse of the Upaniṣad, we have references to tapas, śrāddha, and to those enlightened persons, who were living in sacred forests living on bhaikṣyam (begging):

Ye upavasanti aranye... bhaikṣya-caryā carantah. What was the name of the place where such sages lived?

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- 56. Brahma P. 25.2.
 - 57. Bh.G., XV. 20.
 - 58. Brahma P., 25.3.
 - 59. Cf. Iśāvāsyā Up., 2.
 - 60. Muṇḍaka Up., I.i.7.; Ibid., I. 8-9, I.i.8-9.
 - 61. Ibid., I.i.10.
 - 62. Mundaka., I.i.11.

These abodes of Brahmīṣṭha-Brāhmaṇas were called Āśramas placed in tapovanas.

Samudras (seas), girayah (hills) and Sindhavaḥ (rivers) rising from Him represent His visible form, hence, those were objects of veneration:

अतः समुद्रा गिरयश्च सर्वेऽस्मात्प्यन्दते सिन्धवः सर्वरूपाः २

63

Hence they were all recognised as tīrthas from the very age of the R̥gveda which sings songs in the praises of Samudra, girayah and sindhavaḥ. These songs are elaborately glorified in the māhātmyas of tīrthas in the epics, Purāṇas and Smṛtis.

In all such places there were Āśramas. What should be the nature of such hermitage is expressed in the following upaniṣadic verse:

समे शुचौ शर्करावत्तिबालुकाविवर्जिते शब्दजलाश्रयादिभिः।
मनोनुकूले न तु चक्षुपीडिते गुहानिवाताश्रयणे प्रयोजयेत् ३॥

Such places as described above were conducive to Dhyāna-yoga (meditation). It should be on plain ground free from stones, sand and fire and above all it should be pure and sacred (śucau) stimulating placidity in mind without disturbing or agitating. There should be nothing to strain the eyes. Hence, green forests full of flowers and forests along the banks of seas, rivers, ponds and tanks etc. were most commendable. Guhā-nivātāśrayaṇa i.e. caves, natural or man-made, were popular resorts of ascetics. In the Vindhyanava, the hills and forests of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, abound in such caves, which were abodes of ascetics and not of wild tribes as most of the modern scholars believe them to be. There are hundreds of references to such guhā-āśrayas in the Upaniṣads and Buddhist literature. Jain literature too speaks of such caves.

Siva is himself styled Giritra-Giriśanta. The abode of Brahman is called Guhā i.e. cave in our hearts. The garbhagṛha of a temple is also a guhā. He is placed in our heart's Guhā (anorāṇīyān mahato mahīyān ātmā nihito guhāyām) and He alone is sought in the āśramas.

Svetāśvatra was himself a great Śaiva ascetic, whose āśrama presents a picture of an ideal tīrtha as a religious and intellectual centre.

63. *Ibid.*, II.i.9.

64. *Svetasvaraya Up.*, I.10.

In the family of Dhruva, Suśīla - a great kṛṣṇa-bhakta - was born a prince, who was a pious and enlightened person well-versed in the Vedas. He retired to a forest as an ascetic. Having performed pilgrimage (sa kṛtvā tīrtha-saṁsevām), he adhered to svādhyāya and tapas. He proceeded to the Himālayas - the abode of Siddhas. Here on the Himavat-prastha, he arrived at Dharmapada in a sacred forest, where one can realise Dharma-siddhi. It lies beyond the reach of illusioned persons (due to hardships of climb and climate).

Here was flowing the sacred river Mandākīnī adorned with the hermitages of Siddhas. Suśīla was pleased to see a beautiful hermitage inhabited by great sages and meditators.⁶⁵ He took bath in the Mandākīnī, propitiated the Manes by offering them ablutions of water and then worshipped Śiva meditating upon the glories of Rudra (Rudra-caritam) mentioned in the Rudrādhyāya etc.

मन्दाकिनीजले स्नात्वा संतर्प्य पितृदेवताः
अर्चयित्वा महादेवं पुष्टैः पद्मोत्पलादिभिः
ध्यात्वार्कसंस्थमीशानं शिरस्याधाय चाङ्गलिम्
संप्रेक्षमाणो भास्वत्नं तुष्टव परमेश्वरम् ॥ 2

66

Let us analyse the religious life of Suśīla. At first,

- (i) he renounced the kingdom and took to saṁ-nyāsa (renunciation);
- (ii) he went on pilgrimage to visit the sacred places, where he used to listen to the religious discourses of Ṛsis and munis, meditating on Truth.

This is what we mean by the word tīrtha-saṁsevām svādhyāye tapasi sthitah.⁶⁷ The result of such tīrtha-saṁsevā or pilgrimage was the development of *nirveda* (indifference to worldly objects), leading to *vimarśa* (reasoning), which instils the spirit of enquiry leading to Truth. Suśīla found in that *tapovana* the great sage named Śvetāśvatara, an exalted devotee of Śiva-Paśupati. The royal ascetic fell upon the feet of Yogi, Śvetāśvatara. King's entreaties to accept him as his disciple were accepted by the great Śaiva teacher who instructed him in the Śaiva philosophy based on the *Vedasāra* (text).⁶⁸

65. Kurma P. (kh), I.13. 22-27.

66. *Ibid.*, I.13.28-29.

67. Kūrma P., I.13.24 (i).

68. *Ibid.*, I.13.24-38.

In this hermitage of Śaiva teacher, named Śvetāśvatara there were many students and disciples devoted to Brahmacarya belonging to three classes of society called Dvijas.⁶⁹ He addressed the inmates of his āśrama. His speech throws valuable light on the philosophy of Śvetāśvatara in general and that of the Pāśupatas in particular. His speech is also the *Dharmavana-Māhātmya* i.e. the glorification of that tapovana as a Siddhi-kṣetra. Dharmapada, placed on the bank of the river Mandākinī lay not far from Kedāra. Śvetāśvatara spoke to his disciples:

उवाच शिष्यान् संप्रेक्ष्य ये तदाश्रमवासिनः।
ब्राह्मणान् क्षत्रियान् वैश्यान् ब्रह्मचर्यपरायणान्॥

He said: मया प्रवर्त्तितां शाखां शाखामधीत्यैवेह योगिनः।

समासते महादेवं ध्यायन्तो निष्कलं शिवम्॥

इह देवो महादेवो रममाणः सहोमया।

अध्यास्ते भगवानीशो भक्तानामनुकम्पया॥

इहाशेष जगद्वाता पुरा नारायणः स्वयम्॥

आराध्यन् महादेवं लोकानां हितकाम्यया॥

इहैव देवमीशानं देवानामपि दैवतम्।

आराध्य महर्तीं सिद्धिं लेभिरेदेवदानवाः॥

इहैव मुनयः पूर्वं मरीच्याद्या महेश्वरम्।

द्वृष्टा तपोबलाज्ञानं लेभिरेसार्वकालिकम्।

श्रावान्तो दान्तो जितकोथः संन्यासविधिमाश्रितः॥

The English translation of the whole passage quoted above is given below:

'The Yogins, after studying the branch of knowledge introduced by me, meditate upon the Great-god (Mahādeva) Śiva in His Niṣkala form (formless). Śiva, Himself, resides here in the company of His consort, Umā for the good of his devotees. Here, in the past, the Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself, the Creator of the entire world, worshipped Mahādeva. It is here that the sages like Marīci etc. had acquired perfection in knowledge and Yoga by worshipping Ṣīśāna-deva, god of gods as well as by virtue of penances. Hence, O King, you should also permanently live here practising Yoga and penances in my company, so that you may be an accomplished Siddha. Having said so, the great teacher- philosopher offered his salutations to Śiva and imparted properly to the king (Śiva) - jñāna styled *Vedasāram* along with the Mantra beginning with the word Agni. This Mantra destroys the sins.

The king accepted his advice and became devout Śaiva-Pāśupata and continued his study of the Vedas (svādhyāya-yoga). He besmeared his whole body with ashes. Following strict discipline of his mind and body, with control over anger, he practised Saṁnyāsa-vidhi (at that hermitage on the Himālaya along the banks of the Mandākīnī).

SOME IMPORTANT FOREST - UNIVERSITIES OF BHARATA VARSA

In the above mentioned account of Śvetāśvatara, we get the glimpses of ascetic life and intellectual culture which was developed in the hermitages. The picture of the hermitage of Śvetāśvatara is presented in its real setting in sylvan solitudes of the Himālayan forest. Śvetāśvatara is the celebrated author of the Upaniṣad of the same name. We would like to quote the entire text followed by its translation. It runs thus:

स कृत्वा तीर्थसंसेवां स्वाध्याये तपसि स्थितः।
 जगाम हिमवतः पृष्ठं कदाचित् सिद्धसेवितम् ॥
 तत्र धर्मपदं नाम धर्मसिद्धिप्रदं वनम् ।
 अपश्यद्योगिनां गम्यमगम्यं ब्रह्मविद्विषाम् ॥
 तत्र मन्दाकिनी नाम सुपुण्या विमला नदी ।
 पद्मोत्पलवनोपेता सिद्धाश्रम विभूषिता ॥
 स तस्या दक्षिणे तीरे मुनीन्द्रैर्योगिभिर्युतम् ।
 सुपुण्याश्रमं रम्यमपश्यत् प्रीतिसंयुतः ॥
 मन्दाकिनीजले स्नात्वा सन्तर्प्य पितृदेवताः ॥
 अर्चयित्वा महादेवं पुष्टैः पद्मोत्पलादिभिः ।
 ध्यात्वार्कसंस्थमीशानं शिरस्याधाय चाञ्जलिम् ॥
 सम्प्रेक्षमाणो भास्वन्तं तुष्टव परमेश्वरम् ।
 रुद्राध्यायेन गिरिशं रुद्रस्य चरितेन च ।
 अन्यैश्च विविधैः स्तोत्रैः शाम्भवैर्वेदसम्भवैः ।
 अथास्मिन्नन्तरेऽपश्यत् समायान्तं महामुनिम् ।
 श्वेताश्वतरनामानं महापांशुपत्तोत्तमम् ॥¹

Performing the duties enjoined to be done by a pilgrim at places of pilgrimage (tīrtha-saṁ-sevām) and other austerities like svādhyaya-yoga etc. Suśila proceeded to a Himālayan peak resorted to by Siddhas. There he saw a beautiful forest called Dharmapada (Dharmāraṇya). on the bank of the river Mandākīnī adorned with the hermitages of Siddhas

70. Km. P., I.14.24-31 (Km. KR., I.13.24-31).

Here, was also the hermitage of Śvetāśvatara Muni,⁷¹ where his disciples were engaged in the study of scriptures.⁷²

The Kūrma Purāṇa portrays another beautiful picture of Himālayan University, the hermitage of Upamanyu⁷³ visited by Krṣṇa-Vāsudeva:

जगाम योगिभिर्जुषं नानापक्षिसमाकुलम् ।
 आश्रमन्तूपमन्योर्वै मुनीन्द्रस्य महात्मनः ॥
 नानाद्रुमलताकीर्ण नानापुष्पोपशोभितम् ।
 कृषीणामाश्रमैर्जुषं वेदघोषनिनादितम् ॥
 आरामैर्विविधैर्जुषं देवतायतनैः शुभैः ।
 कृषिभिरूषिपुत्रैश्च महामुनिगणैस्तथा ॥
 वेदाध्ययनसम्पन्नैः सेवितञ्चाग्निहोत्रिभिः ।
 योगिर्भिर्ध्याननिरतैर्नासाग्रन्थस्तलोचनैः ॥
 उपेतं सर्वतः पुण्यं ज्ञानिभिस्तत्वदर्शिभिः ।
 नदीभिरभितो जुषं जापकैर्ब्रह्मवादिभिः ॥
 सेवितं तापसैः पुण्यैरीशाराधनतत्परैः ।
 प्रशान्तैः सत्यसंकल्पैर्निःशोकैर्निरूपद्रवैः ॥
 भस्मावदातसर्वांगैः रुद्रजाप्यपरायणैः ।
 मुण्डितैर्जटिलैः शुद्धैस्तथान्यैश्च शिखाजटैः ॥
 सेवितं तापसैर्नित्यं ज्ञानिभिर्ब्रह्मवादिभिः ।
 तत्राश्रमवरे रम्ये सिद्धाश्रमविभूषिते ॥
 गंगाभगवती नित्यं वहत्येवाघनाशिनी ॥³

Bhagavatī Gaṅgā (Mandākinī) near Kedāra on the Himālaya was adored by Pāśuta-ascetics and other pious Ṛsis and Ṛsi-Putras studying Vedas. In this sylvan solitude there were birds (aniketas) trees laden with fruits and flowers, gardens and temples. Yogis, Tāpasikas, and Brahmanvādins (Vedāntins) meditated in temples. Yogis Tapasikas and Brahmanvadins (Vedantins) meditated upon Iśa (Śiva).

71. Km. P., (RSB) I.14.24-32.

72. *Ibid.*, I.14.39

73. *Ibid.*, I.25.3-12

This is the graphic account of the life of the people engaged in various religious practices without any trouble. Such is the real picture of the Āśramas, as centres of education and religious life. But Wilson, Winternitz or Pargiter could not behold these scenes of a glorious heritage. Indian scholars like Hazra etc. blindly followed in the footsteps of these western masters.

There were many such important centres of intellectual and spiritual culture where 'Samājas' (Conferences of learned persons-sages, saints and Munis) were held to discuss important matters and national problems.

The Ayodhyā Māhātmya of the Skanda Purāṇa opens with the account of a conference of enlightened sages well-versed in the Vedas held at Kurukṣetra Mahākṣetra convened by Rāma in the course of a *sattrā* lasting twelve years.⁷⁴ It runs thus:

हिमवद्वासिनः सर्वे मुनयो वेदपारगाः ।
त्रिकालज्ञा महात्मानो नैमिषारण्यवासिनः ।
येऽर्बुदारण्यं निरता दण्डकारण्यवासिनः ॥
महेन्द्राद्विरता ये वै ये च विन्ध्यनिवासिनः ।
जंबूवनरता ये च ये गोदावरिवासिनः ।
वाराणसीश्रिता ये च मथुरावासिनस्तथा ।
उज्जयिन्यां रता ये च प्रथमाश्रमवासिनः ॥
द्वारावतीश्रिता ये च बदर्याश्रिणस्तथा ।
मायापुरीश्रिता ये च ये च कान्तीनिवासिनः ॥
एते चान्ये च मुनयः सुशिष्या बहवोऽमलाः ।
कुरुक्षेत्रे महाक्षेत्रे सत्रे द्वादशवार्षिके ।
वर्तमाने च रामस्य क्षितीशस्य महात्मनः ॥
समागताः समाहृताः सर्वे तु मुनयोऽमलाः ।

We have given this list in the first volume of this part of the studies in the Skanda Purāṇa, while dealing with the Ayodhyā Māhātmya.⁷⁵

74. Sk., II.viii.1.3.8.; Cf. St. Sk.P., III.i, pp. 73.74.

75. St. Sk. P., Pt. III, Vol.i (III.i), pp. 73-74.

PADMA PURĀNA - LIST OF SUCH CULTURAL CENTRES

The Padma Purāṇa (Ass Edn.) also opens with the same picture of Ascetics, conference held at Naimiṣa. It runs thus -

एकदा मुनयः सर्वे ज्वलज्जवलनसंनिभाः ।
 हिमवद्वासिनः सर्वे मुनयो वेदपारगाः ॥२
 त्रिकालज्ञा महात्मानो नानापुण्याश्रमाश्रयाः ।
 महेन्द्राद्रिरता ये च ये च विन्ध्यनिवासिनः ॥३
 येऽबृदारण्यनिरताः ये च पुष्करारण्यवासिनः ॥
 जाम्बुमार्गरता ये च ये च सत्यनिवासिनः ॥४
 धर्मारण्यरता ये च दण्डकारण्यवासिनः ॥
 श्रीशैलनिरता ये च कुरुक्षेत्रनिवासिनः ॥२

Here we find reference to the following forest Universities:

- 1) Himvat-khaṇḍa (Himālayan kṣetra)
- 2) Mahendrādri (Eastern Ghat) - Orissa
- 3) Vindhya-vana
- 4) Arbudāranya (Abu, Rajasthan)
- 5) Puṣkarāraṇya (Pushkar, Rajasthan)
- 6) Jambū-mārga
- 7) Satya (Satyanivāsinah) is a mistake for Kāntī
- 8) Dharmāraṇya
- 9) Dandakāraṇya
- 10) Śrīśaila
- 11) Kurukṣetra
- 12) Naimiṣāranaya where they had arrived to pay visit to Śaunaka.

In the Padma Purāṇa we get the new names of Puṣkarāraṇya, Dharmāraṇya and Śrīśaila.

We have dealt with Dharmāraṇya in the first volume.⁷⁶ Puṣkarāraṇya = Padma Purāṇa deals with the glorification of Puṣkarāraṇya or Puṣkara,⁷⁷ which was defiled by the Mleccha-Mātaṅgas after the fall of Pṛthvirāja III.

76. Padma, I. 1.2-5.

77. St. Sk. P., III.i., pp. 91-97.

78. Padm. P., I. II. 20-36.

Puṣkarāranya is associated with Brahmā (or Pitāmaha), and it was one of the famous Pitr-tīrtha⁷⁹ famous for the performance of Śrāddha. It is called Āditīrtha, abode of Ādideva (Brahmā).⁸⁰ Puṣkara symbolises the lotus wherefrom Brahmā sprang.⁸¹ It was a beautiful forest region comprising various types of trees laden with flowers and fruits.⁸² It is stated to be most sacred kṣetra (Uttamarī sarvakṣetrāṇām puṇyām etad).⁸³ Brahmā was worshipped here.⁸⁴ It was also a vaisṇava kṣetra.

Similarly there were other sacred forests - kṣetras and Mahākṣetras like Vedāranya etc. We will deal with them in the chapter styled Tīrtha-saṁgraha. Here, our aim is only to show the importance of the Skanda Purāṇa as a Tīrtha-Saṁhitā.

79. PRV.,

80. Padm., V.ii.11.

81. *Ibid.*, V.15.18.

82. *Ibid.*, V.15.21-57. Chapter 15 of Pdm. (V) deals with Puṣkara Māhātmya.

83. *Ibid.*, V.15.61 (i).

84. *Ibid.*, V.15.77-98.

REVĀ TO DVĀRAKĀ

The last two sections of the Skanda Purāṇa viz., the Nāgara Khaṇḍa (VI) and the Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa (VII) deal with the Pāścātya Cakra (Western India) comprising Ānarta (Northern Gujarat), Saurāṣṭra (Kathiawad) and Arbuḍāranya (Ābu region of Rajasthan).

During the sun-set of the Golden Age of the Guptas, the country witnessed the attacks of the Hūṇas called Mlecchas¹ in the Junagarh inscription of Skanda Gupta, who had suppressed them. Kālidāsa hailed it as the coming of Kumāra (Kārttikeya). There was also some trouble in the western India and Skanda, successfully removed the tragedy. He made new administrative arrangements in Saurāṣṭra.

The Junagarh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta refers to the sacred hill called Ūrjayata (Udayanta giri) near Somanātha, to the western side of which stood the Raivata mountain.²

The hill named Ūrjayat (Ūrjayanta) denotes the Girnar (Girinagara) hill.³ The Junagarh Rock inscription of Śaka Mahākṣatrapa Rudradāmanal (dated 72 S.E. = 150 A.D.) tells us that Sudarśana lake was constructed during the reign of Candra Gupta Maurya. This inscription refers to the river Svārṇasiktā identified with the Sonarekhnā, issuing from the Raivata Hill.⁴ The Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa of the Skanda Purāṇa glorifies not only Somanātha, and Prabhāsa, but also the Raivata mountain along with the sacred forest around it and the river Suvarnarekhā.

Among the three famous sacred regions (kṣetratrayaṁ)⁵ viz., Kurukṣetra, Hātakēśvara kṣetra and Prābhāsika kṣetra (Prabhāsa), these last two sections of the Skanda Purāṇa viz., the Nāgara Khaṇḍa (VI) and the Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa (VII), respectively deal with the glorification of Hātakēśvara

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1. Junagarh Rock Ins. of Skanda Gupta (CII, Vol.III, No.14), 1.4.
 2. Sk., VII. ii, 1.68;
 3. C.I.I., Vol.III, p.57..
 4. Cf. Epi. Indica, Vol.VIII, p.36f.
 5. Sk., VI. 199.3(i):

kṣetra and prabhāsa kṣetra. Each of these sections is an important text on pilgrimage and each section gives the essence of the tīrtha-literature of ancient India in addition to the important lists of tīrthas (sacred spots) and tīrthāyātanas (sacred shrines) dedicated to different deities.

The pilgrim, here (in this volume) marches ahead from the Revā-sagara-saṅgama (Bhṛgukaccha = modern Bhroach) to Prabhāsa, Arbudā-rāṇya and Dvārakā. All these places have their high antiquity and great sanctity.

This section had attracted the notice of Prof. H.C. Raychaudhury as early as 1929 (I.H.Q.), who observes:

"It will be our endeavour in this short note to call attention to a legend in the extant Skanda Purāṇa in which we come across some historical allusions..... In the Prabhāsa-Khanda... there is a section called Vastrāpatha-māhātmya, which is a collection of tales about the sacred sites of Vastrāpatha or Girnar in Surāṣṭra or Khthiawad. The most conspicuous features of this region are the Mount Raivataka and the river Suvarṇarekhā or Svarṇarekhā, perhaps identical with the Suvarṇa-siktā... mentioned in the Junagarh Rock Inscription of the great Śaka Satrapa Rudradāman I".⁶

This region was ruled by Nāgabhata II and his grandson Mihira-Bhoja, who had assumed the title of Prabhāsa.⁷ Verily he was Daitya-sūdana - exterminator of Daityas. Since the days of Skanda Gupta, the political condition of Paścima-deśa had been full of crisis. It was aggravated by the appearance of Tājikas, and Turuṣkas in this region. It was this national crisis, that had led to the advent of Pratihāras - the defenders of Indian Gate-way. Thus sun-set was apparent in the horizon of Bhāratabhūmi. It was the real Kali Age, which was marked by the dark night of distress after the departure of Kṛṣṇa. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa poses a question: When Śrī Kṛṣṇa (devoted to Brāhmaṇas), who was the defender of Dharma, had left the earth and departed to his abode, who was the saviour of Dharma?

Dharmaḥ kam śaraṇam gataḥ.⁸

6. St. Ind. Ant., pp. 150-151.

7. Awasthi, Hist. Pur., p.

8. Bhāgavata P., I. 1.23.

KRŚNA'S BIRTH AND TYRANNY OF KAMSA

Thanks to the ancient sages, who have described in short "*the influence of Islam on Hindu Culture*" which historians like Dr. Taracand could not even think of. While describing the tyrannies of Karīsa, the Bhāgavata Purāṇa tells us.

Karīsa summoned his ministers and reported to them what Yoganidrā (Devi Māyā) had said to him. Hearing the narration of Karīsa, the demons, enemies of gods, spoke to him: If this be the case, we shall massacre all children. What can the gods do with all their endeavours. They are cowards on the battle-field. They live in perpetual terror of your might. Being beaten on all sides with volleys of arrows discharged by you, they deserted the battle-field and took to their heels. Some gods laid down their arms and stood with folded hands, while others with loin-cloth untucked and hair on the head untied and dishevelled announced, 'we are afraid'.... What can gods do to harm us?.... We think that gods due to their enmity should not be ignored. Therefore, deploy us to destroy their roots viz., Viṣṇu, Vedas, Brāhmaṇas and Cows."⁹ Such was also the fate of Tīrthas and shrines.

KALI-KĀLA-BHAYAM AND TĪRTHA-VIPLAVA

Kalikāla-bhaya¹⁰ denotes *Paracakra-bhaya*¹¹ i.e. fear caused by foreign invasions and alien domination. Kali Age meaning the age of defeat, decline and destruction, represents an age of terror and turmoil caused by Kali (= Mleccha). Among many things subjected to destruction, religion and society based on Sanātana Dharma (Vedic Dharma) stood on the verge of collapse. Tīrthas and temples, which were centres of education, learning, piety and penance, were defiled and destroyed.¹² Thus Kali-Age is characterised by Tīrtha-Viplava.¹³

Saurāstra styled 'subhikṣam'¹⁴ i.e. prosperous, and Ānarta, a

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- 9. Bhāgavata P., X. 4.29-42. Here we have reference to Turuṣkas. Wilson and Dr. R.C. Hazra could not notice it.
 - 10. Sk., VI. 175.9 (ii).
 - 11. *Ibid.*, VI. 176.20 (ii).
 - 12. *Ibid.*, VI. 175.10.
 - 13. *Ibid.*, VI. 179.22.
 - 14. *Ibid.*, VI. 47.26.

beautiful country (*ramyām*),¹⁵ had witnessed many ups and downs in their history. Śaka rulers, though they were foreigners, had enriched the region with culture and art. But during the post-Harṣa period, it was subjected to shocks and spoils at the hands of Arabs (*Yavanasi* i.e. *Kālayavanas*, *Tājikas*) and *Turuṣkas*.

NĀGARA KHĀNDĀ VI

The term 'Nāgara' created confusion in the minds of art-historians dealing with the temple-architecture (cf. terms: Nāgara, Drāviḍa and Kesara - not vesara which is a misreading)¹⁶ due to their ignorance about the existence of *Nagara kṣetra*, glorified in the Nāgara Khāndā of the Skanda Purāṇa (Section VI). There are references to *Nagara-sthānam*, embellished with majestic temples represented by 68 Śaiva shrines and other shrines set up at different sacred spots of Hātakēśvara kṣetra in the country of Ānarta, which was a beautiful and prosperous region - the abode of learned Nāgara Brāhmaṇas and ascetics.¹⁷

The region was also associated with the Nāgas (*nāgānām navamāṁ kularām*).¹⁸ There are references to Nāga rājya¹⁹ and Nāgarāja²⁰ as well as to Nāgatīrtha.²¹ Nāgara kṣetra was full of hundreds of tīrthas and temples (*tirthani tathaivayatanāni ca*).²²

LINGODBHAVA DEŚA

Nāgara Khāndā opens with the romantic story of Śiva-līlā portraying Śiva, naked without any āvarana, in His Śuddha and Nirañjana form. Śiva chose to wander naked in the āśramas of Brāhmaṇas and ascetics, who could not realise and recognise Śiva-tatva. They cursed him and His Linga fell. There was a crisis in the world. Brāhmaṇas had to regain the favour of Śiva, whose Linga was recognised as the most venerable object of

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- 15. *Ibid.*, VI. 47.27-28.
 - 16. Awasthi, A.B.L., St. Sk. P., Pt. IV, pp.
 - 17. SK., VI. 179. 50-51.
Ibid., VI. 199.85
 - 18. *Ibid.*, VI. 204.9-11.
 - 19. *Ibid.*, VI. 183.22 (i), 25-27, 32-35.
 - 20. *Ibid.*, VI. 183.35.
 - 21. *Ibid.*, VI. 183.36.
 - 22. *Ibid.*, VI. 183.37, 42f.
Ibid.,

workship. Thus, the story of the origin of Linga (Liṅgodbhava) and its glorification led to a new nomenclature of Ānarta, now named Liṅgodbhava Deśa,²³ Rājaśekhara refers to Liṅgodbhava episode.²⁴ The political condition of pāścātya-cakra comprising Valabhi, Bhṛgukaccha, Gurjarātra, Mālavā, Saurāṣṭra, Ānarta and Ābu was very much disturbed due to inroads of Arabes who occupied Sindh and tried to extend their sway.²⁵ Gurjarātra comprising 'Marmad' (Maru-maṇḍala), Valabhi, Barus (Broach) and Saurāṣṭra were attacked. They wanted to conquer even the whole of Dakṣināpatha, but Pulakeśina Avanijanāśraya defeated them.²⁶ Thus, the advent of the Mlechhas, once again, after the reign of Skanda Gupta, created an era of crisis, which led to the advent of Door-keepers' of Bhāratabhūmi, Dvāravatī (Dvārakā) seems to have felt a need of its saviour.

This was a grave meance to western region bordering on the sea-coast caused by the Arab invasions. Tīrthas and tīrthikas had to suffer. But Pratihāra ruler Nāgabhata II, Pāla ruler Dharmapāla and, again after him, the Pratihāra rulers Mihirabhoja (Prabhāsa), Mahendrapāla and Mahipāla I stood as the real Door-keepers (Pratihāras) of the country. They crushed the Mlechhas and Yavanas. They extended active patronage and protection to the tīrthas and temples of Western India. The cult of pilgrimage became very popular.²⁷ Śiva was the most exalted deity for whom great temples like that of Somanātha were built. Śakti-pīṭhas, too, were popular. Tīrthas and temples associated with Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Ganeśa and Kārtikeya as well as other deities were built all over the region and these were the famous centres of pilgrimage Inscriptions also refer to tīrthas and temples.

Ānarta and Saurāṣṭra, beautiful countries gifted with natural beauty and economic resources, were famous provinces which enjoyed the protection and patronage of the Mauryas (Candra Gupta and Aśoka), Sātavāhanas, Śakas, Guptas, Maitrakas, Pratihāras, Paramāras and Cālukyas.

Both these concluding sections of the Skanda Purāṇa viz., Nāgara Khaṇḍa (VI) and Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa (VII) mainly deal with the glorification of tīrthas of Bhāratavarṣa particularly those of Ānarta, Saurāṣṭra and Arbudāranya. Different religious cults are also discussed and Pākhaṇḍas, the

23. SK.I.iii.39.150(i): St. SK.P., Pt.I, p.46. GAMI, p. 203, No.47. Dr. D.C. Sircar quotes the list of countries from the Kumārikā khaṇḍa without making any attempt to identify them. C.V. Vaidya HMHI, Vol.II, p.39) had already discussed it before I took it in my book (St. SK.P.I.).

24. B.R., II.5.

25. Elliot & Dowson, Hist. Ind., Vol.I, p.12, 121-122.

26. CII, Vol.IV, pp. 97, 101, 106, 139, 144.

27. Alberuni, Al, Pt.II, pp. 142, 146-148.

Nāstikas are censured. Special attention is focussed on the 68 great Śiva-kṣetras of Bhāratavarṣa. Thus Kedāra-nātha descends from Devabhūmi (Himālaya) to Ānarta, where was built the great Śiva temple in the Hātakēśvara kṣetra closely linked with the Dvīpāntara (Pātālaloka).

Next, Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa (VII) seems to glorify Prabhāsa kṣetra and its Lord Daityasūdana who, in the age under review, represents the ruler so named as Prabhāsa (Mihirabhoja). The Vastrāpatha Māhātmya (VII.ii) is an important account of the political and cultural history of Kānyakubja during the region of Prabhāsa (Mihirabhoja), who is advised to follow the policy of blood and iron towards his enemies- Asuras, Daityas - so as to justify the role of Daityasūdana Prabhāsa.

The next section, Arbuda Khaṇḍa takes us to the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha. We know very well the story of the origin of the famous Rājapūta dynasties associated with the Ābu or Arbudāraṇya watered by the river Sarasvatī. Thus its sanctity and celebrity led to its glorification. The sylvan sanctuaries provided suitable place and environment for the assembly of sages (Sk., VII. iii.7.12-13) like Nārada, Śaunaka, Hārita, Devala, Gālava, Kapila, Nanda, Suhotra and Kaśyapa etc. Among these, Devala was personally a witness to the Arab-menace at Debala (a city in Sind) where he had his hermitage cf. Devala Smṛti). Devala must have set up his hermitage in the Arbudāraṇya, where he stimulated national consciousness for the preservation of culture. (cf Devala Smṛti)

The last section of the Skanda Purāṇa (VII.iv) deals with the glorification of Dvārakā - the celebrated city of Kṛṣṇa - Kṛṣṇapuri. Dvārakā, a Mokṣapuri, was a very sacred region marked by the Gomati-Sāgara-Saṅgama.

Kṛṣṇapuri, surrounded by the ocean as its rampart (samudra-parikhām),²⁸ was a fortified town (fort) unassailable extending for 12 yojanas. It was a wonderful city on the sea-coast specially designed by Viśvakarma. Its roads, streets, markets, as well as gardens and parks, palaces, houses, temples and gopuras etc. had been decked with excellent architecture and sculpture. Thus Dvārakā was a great centre of material and spiritual culture.²⁹

The Skanda Purāṇa, an oceanic text, verily Encyclopaedia of Hindu

28. Bhāgavata P., X.52.13(i).
29. Ibid., X. 51.49-55.

Dr. S.R. Rao, pioneer of Marine archaeology is engaged in the study of the remains of ancient Dvārakā submerged in the sea. Thanks to such great son of Bhāratī.

culture and civilisation, contains the most comprehensive account of places of pilgrimage situated in the different parts of the country from the Kedāra-Badārī in the north to Setu and Dhanuṣkoṭī in the south and from Prabhāsa and Dvārakā in the west to Puruṣottama kṣetra and the Gaṅgā-Sāgara in the east. Almost every sacred limb of this Karmabhūmi Bhārata is praised for its sanctity. The tīrtha-dharmaś, darsanam (visit) snānam (bath), dānam (charity), Śrāddha, japa-tapa and Dhyāna etc. are commended. Mānasa-tīrthas are highly commended. It stimulated national consciousness and a will to preserve the relics of the past.

The Nāgara Khaṇḍa glorifies the sanctity of Ānarta, a beautiful country abounding in tīrthas (Ānarta viṣaye ramyāṁ sarva-tīrtha-mayaṁ śubham), where Hātakeśvara kṣetra was the most important region of sanctity.³⁰ Nāgara Khaṇḍa is intimately associated with the Nāgas.³¹

KING RUDRASENA OF KĀNTIPŪRĪ

There is a reference to king Rudrasena of Kāntipūrī,³² Kāntī was the famous capital of the Nāgas. This Kāntī-nātha Mahīpatih³³ named Rudrasena is to be identified with the dauhitra (daughter's son) of Bhavanāga, the great Nāga emperor. He is to be identified with Rudrasena mentioned in Devnimori Stone Casket Inscription of the time of Rudrasena.

Kāntipūrī was a great city (kāntipūrī nāma Purandarapūrī yathā)³⁴ and its ruler was equally, very great. The Nāgara Khaṇḍa showers much encomium on the glory of Kāntipūrī, which was itself a great Śaiva tīrtha. It comprised the shrine of Kedāradeva called Mallālanātha.³⁵

There was also a famous shrine of Kedāradeva in the province of Saurāṣṭra,³⁶ which was the replica of its counterpart in the Himālaya.³⁷

The entire section of the Nāgara Khaṇḍa is a great collection of tīrthas, and in this Tīrtha-samhitā, we find lists of different tīrthas associated

30. Sk., VI. 26.76.

31. Ibid., VI.31.4-6, VI.114.13-46, VI. 117.3f.

32. Ibid., VI. 47.4.

33. Ibid., VI. 47.58(i).

34. Ibid., VI. 76.18 (i).

35. St. SK.P., Pt. III, Vol.I, p.

36. SK., VI. 117.6, 11, 38.

37. Ibid., VI.122.3-32.

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with different deities. Among these lists, the list of 68 Śaiva shrines along with the names of Śiva and Śiva-sthalas is very important, as we have pointed out in the course of their description found in the Kāśī Khanda.³⁸

One thing, which is worth notice, is the glorification of Kānyakubja Mahākṣetra and its tīrthas. Bhojakaṭa,³⁹ the river Kauṣikī⁴⁰ with the shrine of Gaurī⁴¹ on its bank, and Aśvātiṛtha⁴² on the bank of the Gaṅgā (adorned with the shrine of Hayagrīva, a form of Viṣṇu) are also mentioned here along with its kings named Gādhi and Viśvāmitra. Thus Kānyakubja placed on the Gaṅgā (Kānyakubjaṁ Gangātire) in the sacred forest (kanyāvana)⁴³ is specially praised here, for it was the age of the Imperial Kānyakubja.

PRABHĀ KHANDA AND THE MAITRAKAS OF VALABHĪ

Western India particularly Saurāstra was a troubled region during the reign of Skanda Gupta.⁴⁴ After the disintegration of the imperial fabric of the Guptas, Bhaṭṭārka established his kingdom in Saurāṣṭra⁴⁵ with Valabhbī as its capital. The names of Rājā Bhaṭṭāraka and Guhya Bhaṭṭāraka⁴⁶ remind us of the Maitraka rule in Saurāṣṭra under the leadership of Bhaṭṭāraka. Skanda Purāṇa reflects upon this glorious epoch marked by intellectual, religious and spiritual culture and material civilisation of Valabhbī.

Guhya Bhaṭṭāraka⁴⁷ and Guhasena deserve special notice. The title Dharmāditya assumed by the kings of this dynasty reflects upon the glory of Dharmāditya, the most celebrated solar deity of Lāṭa.⁴⁸ (Southern Gujarat). Lāṭa was a beautiful country adorned with hills and forest:

लाटविषयान्नगावृतशैलाज्ञात प्रथितशिल्पाः । ६

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38. Cf. St.Sk.P., Pt. III.i, pp. 115-124.

39. SK., VI. 165.12 (i).

40. *Ibid.*, VI. 165.12(ii).

41. *Ibid.*, VI. 165.19(ii): This temple of Gaurī at Kanyakubja was a great Śakta-piṭha, where the royal princess, daughter of King Gādhi had gone to worship the Goddess (Sk., VI.165.18-21).

42. *Ibid.*, VI. 165.37.

43. *Ibid.*, VI., Chapters 166-167.

44. Junagarh Rock Ins. of Skanda Gupta, W.

45. A.H.S., pp. 92.

46. Sk., VII.i.11.214.

47. *Ibid.*, VII.i.11.215.

48. SK., VII.i.139.25(ii).

49. Mandasore Ins. of Kumāragupta I, I.3.

PRAMITI

Glory of the great king Pramiti (Dhaṅga of the Candella dynasty)⁵⁰ is also sung in the *Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa*. He is remembered for his heroic role in the suppression of Asuras, Pākhaṇḍas (Buddhists and Jains), Mlecchas, Dasyus and Vṛsalas (those who were hostile to Vedas and Brāhmaṇas).⁵¹ As it has been pointed out above, Saurāṣṭra-Kathiawar suffered most during this age of crisis at the hands of the people mentioned above.

DVĪPĀNTARA

This province or region (Saurāṣṭra) was intimately connected with the islands of south and south-east Asia called *Dvīpāntara*, where merchants went from the sea-ports of Saurāṣṭra like *Prabhāsa* and *Bhrgukaccha*.

KĀNYAKUBJA EMPIRE AND DAITYASŪDANA PRABHĀSA (BHOJA I)

If the Golden Age of the Gupta rulers proclaimed the might and majesty of Nārayaṇa-Vāsudeva Varāha, post-Gupta age recognised the Maheśvara-Mahāvarāha, when Vasumatī (the earth) needed a strong saviour.

The storm had blown shaking the roots of culture and religion. India, then, needed a Mahavīra or a Mahapuruṣa who could suppress the enemies of Āryadharma⁵² like Rāmadeva (Rāmacandra) or Rāmabhadra,⁵³ adhering to kṣātra-dharma for the protection of the country and culture.⁵⁴ Thus Vasumatī needed a hero (*Vīra*)⁵⁵ devoted to the annihilation of enemies,⁵⁶ styled Rākṣasas, Daityas and Asuras.

50. St.Sk.P., Pt. I, pp. 185-187.

51. Sk., VII.i.19.75-85. Without studying the *Skanda Purana* or studies in *Skanda Purāṇa* (Pt.I, pp. 185-187) Dr. S.N. Roy (Historical Cultural studies in Purāṇas) has discussed the identity of Pramiti with Chandra Gupta II which is untenable.

52. *Ibid.*, I.6:

53. *Ibid.*, I.52.

54. *Ibid.*, II.41.

55. *Ibid.*, III.1:

56. MVC. III.6:

Harṣa in his zeal for the Buddhism antagonised the Brāhmaṇas of Kānyakubja. With his death fell down his empire broken into pieces.

Yaśovarman of Kānyakuba is mentioned to have accomplished digvijaya,⁵⁷ and defeated the Pārasikas (Arabs). Why did he not destroy the enemies completely?

Lalitāditya of Kāśmīra was a great conqueror, who crushed Yaśovarman. Why did he not combine with Yaśovarman to crush the national enemies? Bhavabhūti aptly observes:

रिपुः प्रत्यासत्तेरहिरिव भयं नो जनयति १

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They could not assess the danger.

Then dawned the age of the Kṣatriya vīras⁵⁹ viz., Pratihāras.

ARBUDA AND GURJARAS

It represents the epoch of the Pratihāras, who were intimately associated with the sacred region of Arbudāranya (Mount Abu and the forest country around this hill). While discussing the original home of the Gurjaras, Dr. Puri observes that "The Jainad inscription from Hyderabad State (Bhandarkar's List, No.2084) refers to the wives of the Gurjara warriors shedding tears in caves of the Arbuda. The association of the Gurjaras with the Arbuda mountain is also noticed in the *Tilaka mañjari* of Dhanapāla (I.39)..... Thus, the association of the Gurjaras with mount Ābu may be presumed. Further, this mountain is also associated with the origin of other ruling families..... from the fire-pit on the mount Arbuda".⁶⁰

Thus Arbudāranya or the Ābu region was closely associated with the Gurjarātra and its people styled Pratihāras, who had the proficiency in repelling the enemies from the doors of the country (pratiharaṇa-vidhe yo Pratihāra āsit). Pratihāras combined in themselves the traits of Brahma and kṣatra (i.e. Brāhmaṇa and kṣatriya).

57. Gauḍavāho. 724.

58. MVC., IV.7.

59. The term Vira denotes a person devoted to the protection of one's own country:
यः परिपाल्य स्वदेशैकपालने रतः स शूरः वीरो वा

60. HGP., pp. 7-8.

Guhilots, the Nāgara Brāhmaṇas, also played very conspicuous role in the protection of the country and culture in the Arbudāraṇya and Pratihāras inherited their traits of character and chivalry. Parmāras are also associated with the sacred region of Arbudāraṇya.

The conquest of Sindh by the Arabs and their raids on the neighbouring territories of Saurāṣṭra, Ānarta, Gurjarāṭra, Mālava, and Mevāḍa stirred the minds of Indian sages and thinkers. Mahākāla-Vana Kṣetra of Ujjayinī or Avantikā was the sacred forest, where they met and thought as to what could be done to preserve the Dharma and culture. It marked the advent of PRATIHĀRAS - The DOOR-KEEPERS or the defenders of doors of Bhāratabhūmi.

Prabhāsa and Dvāravatī were the sacred doors of this sacred land and Pratihāras had to justify their name and fame by giving protection to these sacred places and by repelling the enemies from Indian gateways. The historians of the Pratiharas of Gurjara - deśa never cared to assess the role of the great rulers like Nāgabhaṭa II, Rāmabhadra, Mihirabhoja, Mahendrapāla and Mahipala I.⁶¹ Similarly the historians of the Pāla dynasty did not examine the role of Dharmapāla against the Yavanas. Dharmapāla is associated with the Samudra-yātrā.⁶² He had conquered Avanti and defeated the Yavanas.⁶³ He performed pilgrimage to the important tīrthas of Bhāratavarṣa:

केदारे विधिनोपयुक्तपयसां गंगासमेतेम्बुधौ ।
गोकर्णादिषु चाप्यनुष्ठितवतावन्तीर्थेषुधर्म्याः क्रियाः ॥

He went to Kedāra not in the Himalaya, but on the sea coast at Hāṭakesvara there was Kedara at Hāṭakesvara (SK.VI.122.31-33) as well as to Gokarṇa on the Western Sea-coast. He had also visited Gaṅgā-Sāgara. The epigraph seems to refer to tīrthas of Avanti. He must have bathed in the tīrthas of Avanti and performed religious rites there. Avanti lies on the road to Gokarṇa from Pāṭaliputra. Thus he had also played a true role of Dharmapāla by giving protection to Dharma and culture, particularly to the tīrthas⁶⁴ which were centres of religion and culture.

Devapāla also seems to ahve performed pilgrimage to the Gaṅgā and Setu.⁶⁵ Thus pilgrimage was a popular religious institution even in the

61. Gwalior Stone Ins. of Bhoja, VV., 7-22.

62. Khalimpur Copper Plate Ins., Verse 61.

63. *Ibid.*, Verse 12.

64. 'Avan tīrtheṣु dharmaṁ kriyāḥ' shows that Dharma gave protection to the tīrthas threatened by Mlechhas.

65. *Ibid.*, Verses 14-15.

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early Medieval India, when tīrthas and temples were threatened by the alien invaders.

Advent of the Mlecchas (Tājikas, Yavanas, Turuṣkas and Pāraśikas) in the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. had, thus, disturbed the peaceful progress of religion, and culture, particularly in the Western India (Pāścātya Cakra).⁶⁶

The Nāgara Khanḍa (VI) of the Skanda Purāṇa also refers to the Mlecchas, who defiled the Tīrthas.⁶⁷ Hence sages sought such solitudes, which were safe against the inroads of the Mlecchas. Such a place was the sacred region called Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra free from the Kalibhaya.⁶⁸

GLORY OF PRABHĀSA (DAITYASŪDANA)

Pāñcāla deśa,⁶⁹ rose, once again, on the horizon of history. Mihira-Bhoja, representing the mid-day Sun, Mihira of Kānyakubja, who also known as Prabhāsa. Thus the glory of Prabhāsa or Prabhāsa Māhātmya represents the radiant lustre of Virūpākṣa (Śiva-Bhairava) along with Bahgavatī (Gaurī) the Śakti of Kānyakubja. All these divine elements combined together in the person of Prajāpati (Bhoja I) created an epoch of national consciousness and spiritual progress. He had a strong will to preserve Āryāvarta culture, for which he got his son and successor Mahendrapāla trained under supervision of Rājaśekhara, the author of Bāla-Bhārata, Bāla-Rāmāyaṇa and Kāvyamīmāṁsā etc. Rājaśekhara preached to preserve the freedom of Bhāratavarṣa. He advocates: *Kūrmamurtirjayati*. Glory of Bhāratabhūmi. Another great scholar, Somadeva Sūri is also stated to have composed the *Nītivākyāṁṛtam* under the patronage of Mahendrapāla. Purāṇas like Skanda also exhorted Kṣatriyas to unite and fight for the country's freedom under one leader:

क्षत्रियाश्चापि भूपालमेकं कृत्वा सुभक्तिः ।
तदादेशात् प्रभुं जन्ति महींधर्मेण नित्यशः ॥ 2

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But, it was all in vain and Rāṣṭra-bhaṅga became inevitable.

66. Deopara Ins. of Vijayasena 1.20.

67. Skanda, VI.27.91(ii).

68. *Ibid.*, VI.28.14.

69. Sk., VI.27.24.

70. *Ibid.*, VI.220.7.

BHOJA I AND KĀNYAKUBJA MAHĀKṢETRA

शानामृतसुत्सात्मा योगैश्वर्यप्रसादकः।
योगीन्द्रमानसांभोजराजहंसो द्विजोत्तमः॥ 1

71

Here, in the above quoted verse, we have a covert reference to Bhojarāja (bhoja-Rājahamīsa). It can be read as noted below:

- (i) Yogīndra-mānasa-ambhoja-rājahamīsaḥ and also as
- (ii) yogīndra-mānasāṁ Bhojarāja harīsaḥ dvijottamah.

Bhojarāja, the defender of Āryakīrtī,⁷¹ was definitely Rājahamīsa - the ruler of Kānyakubja 'mahādeśa' - great Kānyakubja empire.⁷²

The Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa, in its Vastrāpatha-māhātmya, opens with the glorious epoch of the history of Kanauj which began with the great ruler named Gādhi⁷³ and which reached its apex under Bhoja I.

Skanda Purāṇa contains the most important account of the history of King Bhoja (Bhojarāja-Vṛttānta).⁷⁴ Prof. H.C. Raychaudhury, who had proposed the abdication of Bhoja did not read the full story. Dr. R.S. Tripathi, in his history of Kanauj, also did not study this valuable historical document, which throws valuable light on the historical geography and topography of Kānyakubja deśa⁷⁵ which comprised Kānyāvana.⁷⁶

GLORY OF PRABHĀSA

Glory of Prabhāsa is the glory of Mihira-Bhoja, who had assumed the title of Prabhāsa. He had given protection to Prabhāsa kṣetra against the raids of Mlechhas and Asuras (gopitam tīrthaṁ prabhāsam).⁷⁷

71. SK, VII.i. 3.33.

72. Gwalior Stone Ins. Verse 26.

73. Sk., VII.ii. 6.20.

74. *Ibid.*, VI. Chapters 165 & 166., VI.165. 12f; Sl.Sk. P., I, p. 128.

75. *Ibid.*, VII. ii. 6.20f 1, 7-18.

76. *Ibid.*, VII. VII. ii.

77. *Ibid.*, VII.II. 7.2

78. SK, VII.i.3.118(ii).

Glory of Mihira (Bhoja) is the glory of Mihira - the Sun-god whose blessings to Rāmabhadra, father of Bhoja I, had led to the birth of Bhoja who was consequently named Mihirabhoja.

There was a famous shrine of the Sun-god in Kānyakubja-mahākṣetra (kṣetra or Mahakṣetra represents sacred region).

King Rāmabhadra, father of Bhoja I, was a devotee of the Sun-god and he performed many austerities and also he observed mystic vows to get a son born to him like Prajapati. The son, born by the grace of Mihira (the Sun-god) was consequently named Mihirabhoja.⁷⁹

BHOJA I AND KṢĀTRADHARMA

India in this age needed a saviour and a true kṣattra (ksatāt samitrāṇānāt kṣatrah) who could give protection to Dharma, Dharā, Veda and Deva. Rāmabhadra was a pious ruler and defender of Dharma (trātā dharmasya). He had inherited from his father, Nāgabhaṭa II, the traits of Rāma exterminator of Rākṣasas (cf. Rāmabhadra's role described by Bhavabhūti in his Mahavīra-carita). The age of Nāgabhaṭa II (Āma-raja) had stressed the need of a saviour like Rāma. It seems that Rāmabhadra was killed in the war against Turuṣkas and so he ruled for a short time. But his devotion to the Sun-god (Mihira) of Kanauj clearly shows the occupation of Kanauja by Nāgabhaṭa II styled Āma (mentioned as a Sārvabhauma ruler of Kanauj). Generations of rulers, Nāgabhaṭa I, Nāgabhaṭa II (both mentioned as Nārāyaṇa-incarnate), Rāmabhadra, Mihirabhoja, Mahendrapāla and Mahipala were devoted to kṣātradharma. They were saviours of Āryadeśa devoted to country and its culture.

KANYAKUBJA DESA

It was one of the 72 Pradeśas of Bāhratavarṣa comprising 36 lakhs of villages. Thus, it represented the great Kanauj Empire, which owes its origin and development to Nāgabhaṭa II. Mihirabhoja added to it, strength and stability, peace and security leading to the development of religion (Paurāṇic Dharma), learning and art in kanyakubja Mahakṣetra.

79. Gwalior Inscription of Bhoja, Verse 2.

The rivers, particularly river-banks and their confluences, became the favourite resorts of sages, saints, students and ascetics. Gaṅgā-tīra Deśa (Kānyakubja Deśa) comprised the sacred forests viz., Kanyā Vana (on the Gaṅgā near Kanauj) and Utpalāraṇya (Bīthur near Kanpur, U.P.).

Kanyā Vana comprised āśramas and temples dedicated to different deities: Vāmana, Varāha, Mihira (Sun), and Gaurī etc. The Vastrāpatha M. opens with the history of King Gaja of Kānyakubja.

Such was the sanctity of Anugaṅgā Kṣetra of Gaṅgā-tīra tapovana, where such exalted R̄sis of Kalpa-grāma lived along with the other sages and saints. King Gaja retired to this forest along with his Queen. He too, performed penances there. In the meantime another great sage named Bhadra arrived there in the company of many Vipras to perform penances on the Ganga-tata

King Gaja met these R̄sis, and Bhadra. Thus, in short, the seventh section dealing with glories of tīrthas of Saurāṣṭra-kathiawar and Ābu region represents the glorious heritage of Imperial Prathāras to which great Calukya rulers like Siddharāja and Kumarāpāla added their own mite and majesty.

Saurāṣṭra situated in the south-western part of Kūrma-shaped Bhāratā was a famous country.⁸⁰ It was shining with the lustre (prabhā) of Bhāratī, hence it was called Prabhāsa.⁸¹ It was Brahmi Bhāratī,⁸² i.e. Veda-Bhāratī.

80. Sk., VII.i.11.37.
81. Ibid., VII.i.11.48-50.
82. Ibid., VII.i.11.50.

NĀGARA KHĀNDĀ

Section VI of the Skanda Purāṇa called Nāgara-khaṇḍa takes its name from the place called Nagara. Chapter 114 of the Nāgara Khāṇḍa (VI), styled Nagarākhyāna refers to the destruction of the city of Camatkarāpura by the Nāgas, who caused havoc to the town and its people (Brāhmaṇas). The Brāhmaṇas succeeded in securing the help of Śiva, who helped them in the restoration and re-establishment of the town. Śiva gave them a mantra 'na-garam' i.e. 'free from poison' and with the recitation of the same mantra Nāgas were forced to leave the city and to go to Pātala (Dvīpāntara). This place known as Nagara (Sk., VI.114.93) came into existence by the blessings of Bharga (Śiva).

Trijāta, a Brāhmaṇa, who had thus succeeded in rescuing the city and people from Nāgabhaya, built a Śiva-temple named Trijāteśvara (Sk. VI.115.4). The city grew prosperous (Sk., VI.115.4).

Raktaśrīga Hill - Camatkārapura, a sacred town, comprising many tīrthas and sacred hill named Raktasrīga, which is highly praised for its sanctity (Chaps.15-16 of VI). The hill was surrounded on all sides by the sacred spots (Chap.18 of VI) of Camatkārapura having an extent of five krosas in its length and breadth (Sk., V.18.2-3). Gayasiras lay in the east; Haripada in the west and Gokarna and Isvara were situated in the south and north, respectively (Sk., VI.17.4).

This sacred region was called Hatakesvara-ksetra before king Camatkara founded a city (named Camatkārapura), which was given in gift to the Brahmanas (Sk., VI.17. 5-6) of that region. Thus Hatakesvara ksetra was the ancient name of Camatkārapura.

Camatkārpura ksetra - (Camatkārodbhava ksetra) or Camatkārapura (Sk., VI.20.74a), the sacred city, founded by king Camatkara, was also called Pancakrosatmaka ksetra (Sk., VI.20.72(ii)). because it extended for five krosas (Sk., VI.18.3).

It was full of tirthas (Sk., VI.51.78). It was also known as Skandapura (Sk., VI.71.38) named after the god Skanda (probably Skanda-gupta). Brahmanas of Camatkarapura built a temple dedicated to Skanda, whom they worshipped (Sk., VI.71.39- 40). It throws important light on the Skanda-cult.

Hatakesvara ksetra Mahatmya of the Skanda Purana describing the holy places of Hatakesvara ksetra or Camatkarapura is very important for the study of the religion and art in that region vaisnavism. Saivism and Solar cult were very popular cults in addition to the worship of Kartikeya and Ganesa. Shrines dedicated to these deities were set up by their devotees.

I. HĀTAKEŚVARA MĀHĀTMYA (Sk., VI.154.34)

While describing the siddhi-sthānāni (Sk., VI.154.23a), tīrthas and shrines (āyatanāni, VI.154.35) of the this region, Skanda refers to it as the first section of the Purāṇa prepared by Kārtikeya:

Etat khaṇḍam purāṇasya parikīrtitam,
kārtikeyapranītasya sarvapāpaharam śubham.¹

We know that this region had stirred the mind of Skanda Gupta, who made administrative arrangements,² in this province and a Viṣṇu-temple dedicated to Cakrpāṇi,³ was set up at Girinagara, which seems to be the same as Nagara mentioned in the epigraph.⁴ The allusion to Skanda (kārtikeya) as an author of this section of the Purāṇa may be ascribed to Skanda Gupta.⁵ The reference to 'Nagara' and 'Nāgareśu'.⁶ associates the personality and achievements of Skanda with the Nāgara Khaṇḍa of the Skanda Purāṇa.

Hatakeśvara kṣetra, Hatakeśvara kṣetra Māhātmya is eulogised for its sanctity and merits (Sk., VI.154.37-43), it seems to be a distinct text dealing with the holy places of Hatakeśvara kṣetra of Camatkārapura. Camatkāra may have been been a title or epithet of Skanda Gupta, who defeated the Hūnas and suppressed the Nāgas - a wonderful feat indeed.

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1. Sk., VI.154.36.
 2. Junagarh Ins. of Skanda Gupta. vv.12-13.
 3. Ibid., VV.43-45.
 4. Ibid., 1.33.
 5. Ibid., 1.12 (verse 20):
Ibid., 1.18 (verse 32):
Ibid., 1.23 (verse.39):
 6. Ibid., 1.13 (verse 22):

It might have led to this epithet of the great hero.

There is a mention of "Camatkāra-khaṇḍa in the *Caturvarga-cintāmaṇi* (Voll.III, Part i, pp.357,360,650,676,698,706-7 and so on)...".⁷ Dr. Hazra observes that "The Camatkāra-khaṇḍa seems to have been preserved partially, with changes and modifications, in the Nāgara-khaṇḍa, which contains a number of chapters on a king named Camatkāra and a town named after him. Two of the lines quoted by Hemādri from a 'Camatkāra-khaṇḍa' are found in Chap.20 of the Nāgara-khaṇḍa".⁸ This Camatkāra-khaṇḍa seems to be identical with Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra Mā-hātmya, as Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra and Camatkārapura kṣetra denoted the same place.

Camatkārapura was inhabited by the learned Brāhmaṇas (Sk., VI.206.13b) well-versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas (Sk., VI.206.17). These Nāgaras (Brāhmaṇas) were proficient in the ritualism, Smṛtis and Śrūtis (Sk., VI.206.18). Despite these virtues, they suffered from certain vices.⁹ of their character viz., envy, harsh speech, pride, mutual rivalry and devotion to senses despite their life of asceticism and learning (Sk., VI.206.20-21).

II. PURAŚCARANA SAMĀHITĀ

The first section (Prathama-khanda) of the Nāgara-khaṇḍa comprises chapters I to 154 (1 to 150 of N.K. Edn.). The subsequent portion of the Nagara-khanda (Chap.151 ff. of N.K. End.) is called Dvitiya khaṇḍa. S.V. Text, however, does not refer to it. This section describes various vratas (vows) śrāddhas and gifts in details, though there are a few references to the foundation of tīrthas and lingas. But prominence is given to Vrataś and Śrāddhaś, whereas the first section mainly deals with the tīrthas of Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra (Camatkārapura). Thus this division of the Nāgara khaṇḍa into two sub-sections is justified.

The second section of the Nāgara Khaṇḍa,¹⁰ dealing with the vratas, śrāddhas and dāna (charity) has been aptly named *Purascarana Samhitā* dealing with the measures meant for purifying the defiled persons. Purascarana is a famous vrata by the observance of which one is free from the sins he committed.¹¹

7. PRHRC., pp.161-162.

8. Ibid., p.162.

9. cf. Risley, the people of India, Appendix I, p.i

10. N.K. (Edn.), Nāgara khaṇḍa, CLV.12.

S.V. Text, VI.162 is faulty as it mentions Puraścarana-somṣritā.
11. Sk., VI.162.37.

Various stories about śuddhi (purification) of different types of persons like Puṣpa, a Brāhmaṇa (Chap.C LX.23), Parāvāsu another Brāhmaṇa (Chap.197), Ahilyā, wife of the sage Gautama (Chap.208), and Śāmba the son of Kṛṣṇa (Ch.213), are mentioned.

Similarly *Cāturmāsyā Māhātmya* enjoins duties. It glorifies Viṣṇubakti, glorifying Śālagrāma-śilārcanām. Thus Nāgara Khaṇḍa glorifies the worship of Harihara- a synthesis between Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism.

NĀGARA KṢETRA

Nāgara kṣetra is a famous region, visited by pilgrims. Ascetics also lived here (Sk., VI.212.37-38).

Nagarapura, a sacred place, was noted for the performance of Prāṇatyāga (Sk., VI.227.7).

HĀΤAKEŚVARA KṢETRA MĀHĀTMYA

An exalted abode of ascetics (Sk., VI.62.16), Hātakeśvara kṣetra was also known as Śrīkṣetra (Sk., VI.19.25a). It was adorned with temples (Sk., VI.26.85b). Lord Hātakeśvara was the presiding deity of this region (Sk., VI.28.13,18; VI.95.18), visited by many persons of great celebrity, as it was studded with tīrthas.¹² While wandering over the whole country in the course of pilgrimage.¹³ Triśāniku, in the company of Viśvāmitra, arrived at Acaleśvara, sacred spot situated on the Arbuda hill. Here they met the sage Mārkaṇḍeya,¹⁴ who told Viśvāmitra to visit Hātakeśvara kṣetra situated in the country of Ānarta to the south west of Arbuda.¹⁵ Hātakeśvara was also the famous Linga- shrine of Pātāla placed on the bank of the Pātālajāñhavi.¹⁶ Hātakeśvara Liṅga is praised for its sanctity and merits.¹⁷

Śaṅkhā tīrtha (Sk., VI.152.4), King Camatkāra of Ānarta, cursed by a female

12. Sk., VI.206.12a.

13. Ibid., VI.4.37-39.

14. Ibid., VI.4.42-43.

15. Ibid., VI.4.52.

16. Ibid., VI.4.54-56a, It is to be identified with the river mekong.

17. Ibid., VI, Chaps.6-8.

deer, went on pilgrimage to Śāṅkha tīrtha situated in Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra,¹⁸ where he was cured of leprosy by taking bath in that sacred tīrtha.¹⁹ It became famous for destroying all diseases.²⁰ It was named after the famous law-giver Śāṅkha.²¹

Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra comprised many holy places.²²

Acaleśvara (VI.13.11-17) - a beautiful temple of Śiva comprising a Śivalinga near Camatkārapura.²³, which was also known for its sanctity. Ch.14 of VI deals with the glorification of circumambulation around this city.

Gayāśira M. (VI.17.7; VI.18.50; VI.19.25-ii; VI.99.4 - There was a famous Kūpikā (a well) here (VI.19.33) noted for the performance of Śrāddha.²⁴

It was called Pitrkūpikā,²⁵ where Rāma perfomed Śrāddha.²⁶

Bālamandana (or *Bālamandapa*) (VI.20.67) - It was situated near the hermitage of Markaṇḍa which lay near the city of Camatkārapura.²⁷ Mārkandeya was born here.²⁸

Sahasrākṣeśa liṅga (VI.22.48) or *Śakreśvara* (VI.22.53) was situated near Bālamandana tīrtha (SK., VI.22.55(i)). *Mṛga tīrtha* (Sk., Ch.23 of VI) situated to the west of Śakreśvara.²⁹ was famous for its sanctity.³⁰

Viṣṇupada tīrtha (M. Ch.24) (Sk., VI.24.1) Viṣṇu Trivikrama placed his first step here in Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra and His second step fell in the Mahat-loka.³¹ By His third step Brahmāṇḍa was broken and a current or water called Viṣṇupadī sprang.³² It was called Viṣṇupada which was also known as Viṣṇupadī Gaṅgā.³³ situated to the west of Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra.³⁴

18. Ibid., VI.10.22-23.
19. Ibid., VI.10.24.
20. Ibid., VI.11.17-20.
21. Ibid., VI.11.36,38,46.
22. Ibid., VI.13.7.
23. Ibid., VI.13.28.
24. Ibid., VI.19.33-35.
25. Ibid., VI.20.2,10.
26. Ibid., VI.20.11-24.
27. Ibid., VI.21.1-3.
28. Ibid., VI.21.4-5.
29. Sk., VI.23.1.
30. Ibid., VI.23.1ff.
31. Ibid., VI.24.8.
32. Ibid., VI.23.9-13.
33. Ibid., VI.25.37.40.
34. Ibid., VI.25.40.

Gokarṇa tīrtha (M., Ch.26) (Sk., VI.26.80) was a Śiva-liṅga set up on the boundary of Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra in the south-east.³⁵

In the course of their journey to Dvārāvatī on the occasion of Duryodhana's marriage Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas came to the prosperous province of Ānarta which comprised Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra.³⁶ Exhorted by Bhīṣma, Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas visited different sacred spots and shrines of this region.³⁷ *Devayajana* (Yajñabhūmi M., Chap. 75 of VI) This sacred region, where the gods set up a Śivaliṅga named Hāṭakeśvara, was entrusted to Kārttikeya for the protection of the Brāhmaṇas,³⁸ who built a temple dedicated to Mahāsena.³⁹ These gods performed sacrifices to the north and to the east of the Mahāsena temple and hence that place was called Devayajana.⁴⁰

Brahmā, Ādityas, Vasus, Rudra, Āśvinas, Siddhas and Kinnaras are stated to reside in Hāṭakeśvara Kṣetra.⁴¹

Hāṭakeśvara was, as it is stated above, a celebrated Liṅga-shrine of Pātāla,⁴² wherefrom it was brought to the city of Camatkārapura.⁴³ by Citraśarmā who built a temple and set up a *hema-liṅga* (gold-linga) therein.⁴⁴ It gained great celebrity and people from the distant regions came to worship the deity.⁴⁵

TĪRTHAS SITUATED IN THE HĀṬAKEŚVARA KṢETRA

Siddheśvara liṅga (Sk., VI.29.4) - It was a Śaiva shrine of Camatkārapure adorned with a patakā.⁴⁶ Chapters 29-30 deal with Siddheśvara Māhātmya.

Nāgā tīrtha (Sk., VI.31.1,110,113). OR

Nāgahrda (Sk., VI.31.93,99)

- 35. Ibid., VI.26.86.
- 36. Ibid., VI.72.7-8.
- 37. Ibid., VI.72.10-28.
- 38. Ibid., VI.75.1-3.
- 39. Ibid., VI.75.6.
- 40. Sk., VI.75.7-10.
- 41. Ibid., VI.102.7-8.
- 42. Ibid., VI.95.92(ii).
- 43. Ibid., VI.107.4,22-ii.
- 44. Ibid., VI.107.15.
- 45. Ibid., VI.107.16-17.
- 46. Ibid., VI.29.137.

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Saptarṣī Tīrtha - Saptarṣī-āśrama (Sk., VI.32.1,88,90) - The celebrated seven seers set up a Śiva liṅga in their hermitage at Camatakarapura kṣetra.⁴⁷

Agastyāśrama (Sk., VI.33.1-2,5; M.Ch.33 of VI) - A Śaiva-shrine containing Śiva-liṅga was set up by Agastya to the south of Hāṭakeśvara.⁴⁸

Agastya had his hermitage in the sacred town of Camatkārapura.⁴⁹ In Camatkarapura kṣetra he established many Pīthas, where lived Yognīs or Mothers.⁵⁰

Citreśvara Pīṭha (Sk., VI.35.55) - was noted for its sanctity (Cf.Chap.30 of VI, Citreśvara Pīṭha M.).

Duhśīla-Prāsāda (Sk., VI.37.30) - A Śiva temple was built by Duhśīla in the city of Camatkārapura.⁵¹

Dhundhumāreśvara (M., Ch.38 of VI) - a Śiva temple set up by king Dhundhumāra,⁵² comprising Dhundhumareśvaa Liṅga.

Yayātiśvara (M., Ch.39 of VI) - a Śiva liṅga set up by Yayāti to the north of Dhundhumareśvara.⁵³

Citraśīlā (Sk., VI.40.26,64)

Brāhmaṇī Sila (Sk., VI., 40.1-13) - set up by Brahmā at Camatkāra- Pura kṣetra, where Sarasvatī appeared in the form of a 'mahāḥṛda'⁵⁴ (a great lake).

Mankanakeśvara (Sk., VI.40.67) - Śivalinga, was set up by the sage Mankaṇaka.

Jalaśāyi Deva - is a Vaiṣṇava tīrtha situated to the north of Mankanakeśvara.⁵⁵ It represents Vāsudeva, Jalaśāyi Janārdana.⁵⁶

47. Ibid.,VI.32.98-100.

48. Ibid., VI.33.46(ii).

49. Sk., VI.35.18-19.

50. Ibid., VI.35.52-53.

51. Ibid., VI.37.47-48.

52. Ibid., VI.38.1.

53. Ibid., VI.39.1.

54. Ibid., VI.40.14-23.

55. Ibid., VI.41.1.

56. Ibid., VI.41.50-51; VI.80.30.

Viśvamitrakunda (Sk., VI.42.1).

Nagara Khanda

49

Visvāmitreśvara (Sk., VI., 44.24,26).

Puṣkaratrayam (Sk., VI.45.1,3,4 (i),11) (Ch. 179 of VI) - Ādya Puṣkara.⁵⁷ represents Puṣkara of Rājasthāna near Ajmer. Viśvāmitra, finding it difficult to reach there for his sacred bath on the occasion of Kārtikī, took bath at different places wherever he found water. He became tired.⁵⁸ Sitting under a tree he offered his prayers to Tripuṣkara.⁵⁹

These three Puṣkaras represent three Kundas viz., Madhyam, Kanīṣṭha and Jyeṣṭha.⁶⁰ which were marked by lotuses in a tank. Thus these tīrthas are -

Jyeṣṭha-puṣkara, Madhyam puṣkara, Kanīṣṭha-puska (Sk., VI.45.28-32)

Sārasvata tīrtha (M., Chap. 46 of VI) - is associated with the goddess Sarasvatī.⁶¹ Bhāratī is worshipped in the form of her four armed image enshrined in the temple.⁶²

Mahākāla (M., Chap.47) - It was famous for *rātrijāgarma*.⁶³

Hariścandra āśrama (Sk., VI.48.1) - where Hariścandra performed penances worshipping Umā and Maheśvara.⁶⁴ He also set up a Śivaliṅga in Camatkarpura kṣetra.⁶⁵

Umā Maheśvara Liṅga (M., Ch.48 of VI) - was a Śaiva shrine containing the image of Umā-Maheśvara set up by king Hariścandra.⁶⁶

Kalaśeśvara (M., Ch.49 of VI) a Śivaliṅga, was set up by king Kalaśa of Yaduvamśa.⁶⁷ who also built a majestic temple.⁶⁸ He also set up the images

- 57. Sk., VI.45.7.
- 58. Ibid. VI.45.10.
- 59. Ibid., VI.45.11
- 60. Ibid., VI.45.12.
- 61. Ibid., VI.46.35-38.
- 62. Ibid., VI.46.35,43.
- 63. Ibid., VI.47.11 ff.
- 64. Ibid., VI.48.2.
- 65. Ibid., VI.48.9.
- 66. Ibid., VI.48.47.
- 67. Sk., VI.49.3.
- 68. Ibid., VI.51.86.

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of Umā and Maheśvara in a temple.⁶⁹ with a kūḍa dug in front of it.⁷⁰ There was also a vāpi near Agastya kūḍa to its east.⁷¹

Bāṇa liṅga (Sk., VI.51.68-72) - It was set up by Bāṇa.

Kapila nadi- It lay to the south of the Vāpi and it is associated with the sage Kapila who attained proficiency in the Sāṅkhya (Philosophy) here.⁷²

Siddha kṣetra (Sk., VI.52.7) - It lay to the east of Kapilā.

Vaiṣṇavi-śilā (Sk., VI.52.9)

Trivenī (Sk., VI.52.10-11)

Rudrakoti (Sk., VI.52.13-19) - (lying to the north of Trivenī).⁷³ was a saiva tīrtha where Brāhmaṇas of South India worshipped Umāpati.⁷⁴

Rudravarta (Sk., VI.52.20-23) - had the shrine of Yogeśvara Śiva

Ujjayinī-pīṭha (Sk., VI.53.1-2) It was a Śaiva shrine of Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra containing the Mahākāla form of Maheśvara.

Bhrūnagartā (Sk., VI.53.9,90) - It is associated with Maheśvara represented in the form of bhrūṇa.⁷⁵

Carmamunḍā devī was a Śākta shrine set up by king Nala.⁷⁶

Naleśvara (Sk., VI.55.1) - It was a Śaiva shrine which lay near Carmamunḍā.⁷⁷

Sāmbasūrya or *Sāmbāditya* (Cf. Chap.56 of VI) It was a solar shrine which lay not far from Naleśvara.⁷⁸ Sage Gālava worshipped Sun in the form of an image.⁷⁹

69. Ibid., VI.52.1.

70. Ibid., VI.52.2-3.

71. Ibid., VI.52.4.

72. Ibid., VI.52.6

73. Ibid., VI.52.11

74. Ibid., VI.52.13-14.

75. Ibid., VI.53.87 (I), 99 (ii).

76. Sk., VI.54.1.

77. Ibid., VI.56.13.

78. Ibid., VI.56.1.

79. Ibid., VI.56.6-7.

Vaṭāditya (Sk., VI.56.21,24) - Vaṭeśvara son of Gālava, built a Sun temple.⁸⁰

Gāṅgeya - A solar shrine is stated to be established by Bhīṣma.⁸¹

Gāṅgeya Tīrtha yātrā to Camatkārapura kṣetra - Tīrthasevā (pilgrimage) was recommended to Bhīṣma who went on pilgrimage visiting tīrthas of the country. He arrived at Camatkārapura kṣetra in course of his tīrthayātrā. Here he visited Gayāśira and performed religious rites viz., sacred bath and śrāddha.⁸² But he was not qualified to perform Śrāddha due to the sin leading to strīhatyā (murder of a woman). He was advised to go to Śarmiṣṭhā tīrtha situated to the west of Gayāśira.⁸³ Bhīṣma built four temples dedicated to Vāsudeva, Sun, Śiva and Durgā.⁸⁴ This (row of temples) was called Devaśreṇī.⁸⁵ These temples are praised for their merits.⁸⁶

In addition to these four shrines, Bhīṣma also set up an image of the Gaṅgā near the well to the east of Śivalinga.⁸⁷ called Śivagaṅgā which is glorified (Chap.57 of VI). here

Vidura-tīrthayātrā of Camatkārapura kṣetra - Vidura is also mentioned to have set up the shrines of Ravi and Śiva.⁸⁸ here Vidureśvara (M., Chap.59 of VI) a Śiva linga, was set up by Vidura.⁸⁹ who visited Hātakeśvara kṣetra and went on tīrthayātrā visiting all the tīrthas. He worshipped sthānadevatās.⁹⁰ and planted aśvattha tree on the Raktaśringa hill⁹¹ called Viṣṇu- vṛkṣa.⁹²

In view of the pious deeds of Bhīṣma (relating to the building of temples) Vidura also thought to build beautiful temples here. So he set up a Śivalinga under a vata-tree and built the shrine of Viṣṇu under aśvattha-tree.⁹³ He also built a temple dedicated to Bhāskara (Sun) worshipped by

- 80. Ibid., VI.56.20.
- 81. Ibid., VI.57.1
- 82. Ibid., VI., 57.17-20.
- 83. Ibid., VI., 57.22-23.
- 84. Ibid., VI.,57.29.33.
- 85. Ibid., VI.,57.36.
- 86. Ibid., VI., 57.39-45.
- 87. Sk., VI.58.1-2.
- 88. Ibid., VI.59.1; VI.59.2.
- 89. Ibid., VI.59.24.
- 90. Ibid., VI.59.10-14.
- 91. Ibid., VI.59.12.
- 92. Ibid., VI.59.9.
- 93. Ibid., VI.59.16.

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the people.⁹⁴ Thus Vidura is mentioned to have built three temples,⁹⁵ dedicated to Śiva, Bhāskara, and Vāsudeva.⁹⁶

A water reservoir was also caused there.⁹⁷ *Māhitthā-devatā* (Sk., VI.60.4-7)

Arjuna tīrthayātrā - Arjuna is also mentioned to have visited Hātakēśvara kṣetra, where he caused a beautiful sun-temple to be built. In front of this sun-temple he set up the shrines Nara- Nārāyaṇa, Govardhanadhara, and Narasiṁha. Thus Arjuna built five temples (devagrha-supāñcadām, Sk., VI.60.20) dedicated to Sun, Nara-Narayana, Govardhanadhara, Narasiṁha and Vināyaka.

Narāditya (Sk., VI.60.9) was (set up by Arjuna (Nara)

Govardhanadhara-Janārdana (Sk., VI.60.11)

Narasiṁha (Sk., VI.60.12(i))

Vināyaka (Sk., VI.60.12(ii)) (iii) and

Nara-Nārāyaṇa (Sk., VI.60.15-16)

Śarmiṣṭhā tīrtha (Sk., VI.62.91) (M., Chap.61-62 of VI) - It was situated in Śarmaṇaṣṭhī Vana (Sk., VI.62.2) or Camatkārapura.

Soma tīrthayātrā Someśvara Liṅga (Soma-tīrthayātrā M. Ch.63 of VI) - was established by Soma (Sk., VI.63.1) in Hātakēśvara kṣetra.

Soma failing to get cured of the disease went on pilgrimage.⁹⁸ In the course of his wanderings he arrived at Prabhāsa, where he met Romaka muni.⁹⁹ who asked him to set up Śivalingas at sixtyeight tīrthas.¹⁰⁰ Hence Soma established liṅgas at Prabhāsa kṣetra named after him.¹⁰¹ Thus Someśvaras were established there (at Prabhāsa) and also at sixtyeight sacred spots.,¹⁰² which are very famous in Indian literature.

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|------|---------------------|
| 94. | Ibid., VI.59.21. |
| 95. | Ibid., VI.59.17.23. |
| 96. | Ibid., VI.59.28-32. |
| 97. | Ibid., VI.59.28. |
| 98. | Sk., VI.63.32-33. |
| 99. | Ibid., VI.63.36. |
| 100. | Ibid., VI.63.44. |
| 101. | Ibid., VI.63.46. |
| 102. | Ibid., VI.63.61. |

Camatkārī Devī (Sk. VI.64.1) - It was a famous Śākta pīṭha (devigṛha, Sk., VI.64.16) which was established by king Camatkāra in Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra. She represents Durgā who killed the demon Mahiṣa.¹⁰³ She was the guardian deity of the city of Camatkārapura.¹⁰⁴ She was worshipped by kings, Brāhmaṇas and sages.¹⁰⁵

Ānarteśvara (M., Ch.65 of VI) - Suhaya, king of Ānarta, caused a tank to be made. He also set up a Sivalinga called Ānarteśvara.¹⁰⁶

Gaṅgā-Yamunā-saṅgama (Sk., VI.65.39) - a sacred place of Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra is marked by a Śiva temple near it.¹⁰⁷ Gayāśira, placed in the east,¹⁰⁸ was noted for the performance of Śrāddha.¹⁰⁹

Śūdrakeśvara a Śivaliṅga was set up by a Śūdra near Gaṅgā- Yamunā- Saṅgama at Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra.¹¹⁰ It was noted for the performance of religious rites, particularly that of Prāṇatyāga.¹¹¹

Rāmaprada (Sk., VI.66.1; VI.94.4) - is associated with Paraśurāma who performed ablutions of blood here. The pit filled with the blood or the Kṣatriyas was called Rāmahṛda.¹¹²

It was also called Gartā tīrtha.¹¹³

Paraśurāma also visited Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra.¹¹⁴ and then he went to the sea-coast where he set up his hermitage on the land requisitioned from the sea.¹¹⁵

Śakti Kuṇḍa (Sk., VI.70.1-2; VI.71.21) - Kārtikeya placed his Śakti after killing Tāraka on the Raktaśringa Hill at Camatkārapura.¹¹⁶ also called

103. Sk., VI.64.2.

104. Ibid., VI.64.3-4.

105. Ibid., VI.64.9.

106. Ibid., VI.65.1-2.

107. Ibid., VI.65.40

108. Ibid., VI.65.45.

109. Ibid., VI.65.55-56.

110. Ibid., VI.65.59

111. Ibid., VI.65.60-68.

112. Ibid., VI.67.36-39; VI.68.1.2; VI.69.10.

113. SK., VI.69.16.

114. Ibid., VI.68.6.

115. Ibid., VI.68.14-17.

116. Ibid., VI.71.21,31.

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Skandapura after the name of Skanda whose Sakti was worshipped here.¹¹⁷

He also established here four deities viz., Ambavraddhā, Āmrā, Māhitthā, and Camatkari.¹¹⁸

Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas also visited Hātakeśvara kṣetra where they also set up Lingas and built temples.¹¹⁹ Dhṛīrāṣṭra and his sons set up one hundred and one Liṅgas; Pāṇḍavas also set up five Liṅgas; the four shrines dedicated to Gaurī were built separately by Draupadī, Kuntī, Gāndharī and Bhānumatī; Vidura, Śalya, Kāliṅga, Yuyutsa, Bālhīka and his son, Karna and his son, Śakuni, Droṇa, Kṛpa and Aśvatthāmā built separately the shrines containing Liṅgas.¹²⁰ Kṛṣṇa, Śāmba, Balabhadra, Pradyumna, Aniuddha and other leaders of the Yādava family also built Liṅga-shrines there.¹²¹ Ten sons of Rukmiṇī also set up ten Liṅgas.¹²²

According to the Mahābhārata, Ānarta, in Western India, comprised many sacred spots and shrines (Vana Parva, 89.1). We, however, do not find a mention of Hātakeśvara kṣetra or Camatkārapura in the Tīrthayatra Parva of the Mahābhārata.

Mahāsenā Prāsāda (Sk., VI.75.6) - Gārgeya (Kārtikeya), asked by Śiva to give protection to Hātakeśvara kṣetra against the evils of the Kali Age established his abode here.¹²³ A beautiful temple of majestic height dedicated to Mahāsenā Deva was built here. A visit to Svāmi (Kārtikeya) is stated to be meritorious.¹²⁴

Bhāskara-tritaya (M., Chap.76 of VI) - These solar shrines of Muṇḍīra, Kālapriya and Mūlasthana were also set up in Hātakeśvara kṣetra.¹²⁵ The Sun-temples comprised images made in accordance with the canons of iconography.¹²⁶

Harāśraya Vedikā (M., Chap.77 of VI) or Haravedī (SK., VI.78.2-1) or Umā-Maheśvara Vedi (Sk., VI.71.1-3,17) - represents the sacred place marked

117. ibid., VI.71.38-44.

118. ibid., VI.71.32.

119. ibid., VI.73.24-26,36-47.

120. ibid., VI.74.1-5.

121. ibid., VI.74.6-7.

122. ibid., VI.74.8.

123. Sk., VI.75.3-4.

124. ibid., VI.75.5-6.

125. ibid., VI.76.6,61-74.

126. ibid., VI.76.72.

by the marriage of Umā and Maheśvara in the Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra.¹²⁷

Rudraśīras (Jāgeśvara) M. (Chap. 78 of VI) - It was a sacred place where Brahmā performed penances placed to the west of Haravedi.¹²⁸

Bālakhilyāśrama ((M., Chap. 79 of VI)) - comprised a linga set up by the Bālakhilyas.¹²⁹ There was a Kundā close to it.¹³⁰

Suparṇeśvara (M., Chap. 82 & 83 of VI) of Suparṇa Deva (Sk., VI.82.34; VI.84.24(ii)).

Garuda set up a Śivalinga,¹³¹ enshrined in the temple dedicated to Isāna Deva, where performance of the religious rite of Prāṇatyāga is recommended.¹³² Skanda deals with Suparṇa- māhātmya.¹³³ in the chapters 82-84 of (VI) the Nagara khanḍa *Mahālakṣmī* (*M., Chap. 85 of VI*) - Lakṣmī, Gajavakrā (with the face of an elephant) due to a curse, came to Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra - and she performed penances here in order to regain her beautiful face.¹³⁴ She was called *Mahālakṣmī*.¹³⁵

Gajavakrā (Lakṣmī) was worshipped.¹³⁶

Saptaviñśatikā (M., Chap. 86 of VI) - represents the shrine of Saptaviñśatikā Devī.¹³⁷ of Durgā.¹³⁸

Somaprāsāda (M., Chap. 87 of VI) - This temple dedicated to Soma¹³⁹ was built in Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra by king Ambariṣa.¹⁴⁰ To its north was built another temple dedicated to Candra.

Dhundhumāra (Sk., VI.87.20) - Skanda here refers to three temples of Moon and, of these, one was built at Prabhāsa. An other temple of Moon

127. Ibid., VI.77.8,10.

128. Ibid., VI.78.2-3.

129. Sk., VI.79.1.

130. Ibid., VI.79.50-52.

131. Ibid., VI.82.17.

132. Ibid., VI.82.29,35.

133. Ibid., VI.83.30.

134. Ibid., VI.85.2-7.

135. Ibid., VI.85.12.

136. Ibid., 85,13-14.

137. Ibid., 86.1.23.

138. Ibid., 86.5.

139. Ibid., VI.87.1.18.

140. Ibid., VI.87.19.

58 *Studies in Skanda Purana — Pt.III—Vol.II*religious rites.¹⁷³

Ānartīya Tadāga (*Sk.*, VI.103.11-12), noted for the performance of religious rites,¹⁷⁴ was situated near the hermitage of Agastya.¹⁷⁵

An exalted shrine of Dāmodara stood near this sacred tank.¹⁷⁶ Here the performance of the rite of Prāṇatyāga is recommended.¹⁷⁷

Kuśesvara and Laveśvara (*Sk.*, VI.104.125) - represent Liṅgas set up by Kuśa and Lava.

Cakratīrtha (*Sk.*, VI.106.3)

Māṭr tīrtha (*Sk.*, VI.106.4) - Liṅgas were set up by Rājarṣi Mucukunda, Sagara, Ikṣvāku, Vasuṣeṇa, Kakutstha, Candradeva Kāśirāja, Agniveśa, Raibhya, Cyavana and Bhṛgu.¹⁷⁸ There were Asramas of Yajñavalkya, Sāṇḍili, and Maitreyī.¹⁷⁹ There were Asramas of Hārīta, Haryaśva, Kutsa, Vasiṣṭha, Nārada and Trita.¹⁸⁰

All these Lingas and Tirthas are stated to be destroyed by the Pretas.¹⁸¹

The reference to Kāśirāja Candradeva (VI.106.6b) is very important. He was the famous Gahadavala ruler of Kānyakulja Sixtyeight Śaiva shrines.

AṢṭAṢṭIH KṢETRĀNAM DEVADEVASY A (Ch.107 of VI)

Dvijeśvara (*Sk.*, VI.67.27) - The sixtyeight śivakṣetras are very famous.¹⁸² Citraśarmā, a Brāhmaṇa of Vatsa family lived in the city of Camatkārapura. He brought here the Liṅga of Hātakēśvara enshrined in a temple built by

173. *Ibid.*, VI.103.7-10

174. *Ibid.*, 103.13-17

175. *Ibid.*, VI.103.32

176. *Ibid.*, VI.103.92-93.

177. *Ibid.*, VI.103.101.

178. *Sk.*, VI.106.5-70(i).

179. *Ibid.*, VI.106.9.

180. *Ibid.*, VI.106.7b-8.

181. *Ibid.*, 106.1-2.

182. *Ibid.*, 107.20.

him. His family of Brāhmaṇas had sixtyeight gotras. All the 68 kṣetralingas were also brought here by the virtue of his penances. He set up an other Linga in beautiful temple in the Hātakēśvara kṣetra called Dvijeśvara.¹⁸³

A group of 68 ksetras was established near the city of Camatkarapura in Hatakesvara ksetra.¹⁸⁴ These 68 temples were associated with 68 gotras of the Brahmanas.¹⁸⁵ devoted to the worship or Siva.¹⁸⁶

Agnikuṇḍa (Sk., VI.113.80-102).

Nāga Tīrtha (Sk., VI.114.13).

Revati Devī (Sk., VI.116.55) was also called Ambā-Durgā and Revati.¹⁸⁷ It was a Śākta tīrtha.

Bhaṭṭikā tīrtha (Sk., VI.117.71) - It comprised a Vaisnava shrine adorned with the image of Viṣṇu in His Trivikrama form; and a Śiva temple containing Maheśvara Liṅga was also built here.¹⁸⁸

Raivateśvara (Sk., VI.118.29-30), a beautiful temple of Śiva, containing a Liṅga was built by king Raivata of Saurāṣṭra.

Kṣemankari Durgā (Sk., VI.118.31) - He also built a temple dedicated to the goddess Kātyāyanī, called Mahiṣāsura-mardini.¹⁸⁹ or Mahiṣāntakarī.¹⁹⁰

Demon Mahiṣa also built a majestic Śiva-temple here containing a Śiva liṅga.¹⁹¹

Kedāra (Sk., VI.122.31-32).

Sukla tīrtha of Camatkarapura (Sk., 123.1,54).

Mukhāra Tīrtha (Sk., VI.124.1,85-86) - Here the celebrated sages met a thief who attained siddhi here and he became famous by the name of

183. Ibid., VI.107.3-27.

184. Ibid., VI.107.40

185. Sk., VI.107.64-66.

186. Ibid., VI.107.77

187. Ibid., VI.116.56.

188. Ibid., VI.117.77.

189. Ibid., VI.118.32.

190. Ibid., VI.119.1.

191. Ibid., VI.119.24.

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Vālmīki, author of the Rāmāyaṇa.¹⁹²

Karṇotpala tīrtha (*Sk.*, VI.125.1, *Ch.*127 of VI).

Satyasandheśvara (*Sk.*, VI.126.29-31).

Aṭesvara - a Śaiva shrine, was built by king Aṭa of Ānarta.¹⁹³

Yājñavalkyāśrama tīrtha (*Sk.*, VI.129.60-63,73).

Kātyāyanī tīrtha and Śāṅḍili tīrtha (*Sk.*, VI.130.5).

Mahāganapati - Vararuci is stated to have set up a shrine of Mahāganapati by worhsipping whom one attains proficiency in learning.¹⁹⁴

Vastupada tīrtha (*Sk.*, VI.132). - It was set up by Kātyāyana along with the fortyeight gods worshipped there.¹⁹⁵

Ajāgrīhā Devī (*Sk.*, VI.133.1,41,65).

Candrakūpikā (*Sk.*, VI.133.52-53) a well famous for sacred bath, was caused by Candra. It was adorned with the shrine of Khaṇḍāśilā.¹⁹⁶ It was also called Saubhāgyakūpikā.¹⁹⁷

Apsaras Kuṇḍa (*Sk.*, VI.133.56).

Chapter 134 (of VI) further glorifies Khaṇḍāśilā and Saubhāgya Kūpikā.

Viśvamitriya tīrtha (*Sk.*, VI.137.3a).

Dharmarājesvara (*Sk.*, VI.138.3) a Śaiva shrine built by Dharmarāja, is glorified in Chapters 138-139 (of VI).

Miṣṭhānnadāyaka deva (*Sk.*, VI.141.1, 58).

Ganapati-trayam (*Sk.*, VI.141.1-2).

192. Ibid., VI.124.2

193. *Sk.*, VI.128.39-40, 51-53.

194. Ibid., VI.131.50-54.

195. Ibid., VI.132.2-5.

196. Ibid., VI.133.54

197. Ibid., VI.133.54b.

Citreśvara or Citrapīṭha (Sk., VI.143.1) was associated with the Ganas and Yognis.¹⁹⁸

Phalavatī Yoginī (Sk., VI.144.86-90).

Citrāṅgadeśvara (Sk., VI.144.160). - Citrāṅgada, (a Gadnharva) built here a Śiva-temple comprising Liṅga.¹⁹⁹ Citrāṅgadeśvara, Jābāli muni-sambhavā (daughter of Jābāli named Phalavatī) and Jābāli were worshipped here.²⁰⁰

Amareśvara (Sk., VI.145.3,5 ff) or *Amara Liṅga* (Sk., VI.145.43) - and a kunda in formt of it were set up by Aditi.²⁰¹

Vatīkeśvara (Sk., VI.147.1; Chap. 148 of VI).

Keliśvari Devī (Sk., VI.149.1,11; VI.150.3,27; VI.151.1)

(M., Chaps. 149 & 150 of VI).

Bhairava kṣetra (Sk., VI.151.54).

Ekādaśarudraka (Sk., VI.152.5).

Vaṭāditya (Sk., VI.152.6).

Māhitthā Devī (Sk., VI.152.7).

Gaṇeśa (Sk., VI.152.8).

Jyeṣṭhā Gaurī (Sk., VI.152.9).

Cakrapāṇi (Sk., VI.152.10-11,13) - a Vaiṣṇava temple was set up by Arjuna.²⁰²

Arjuneśvara (Sk., VI.152.29).

Rūpatīrtha (Sk., VI.153.1,46-52) - represents a large tank having the shrine of Pārvatī.²⁰³ The sacred kunda and the Shrine of Pārvatī were famous holy

198. Sk., VI.144.67

199. Ibid., VI.144.107.

200. Ibid., VI.144.160-163.

201. Ibid., VI.145.46-48.

202. Ibid., VI.152.32-39.

203. Sk., VI.153.53.

62 *Studies in Skanda Purana — Pt.III—Vol.II*places.²⁰⁴*Gaurī kūṇḍa* (*Sk.*, VI.154.3).*Vijayakuṇḍa* (*Sk.*, VI.154.5).*Citreśvara-pīṭha* (*Sk.*, VI.154.17-18).

Catuhāṣṭigānā of Mothers - A temple dedicated to 64 Mothers was a famous shrine of Camatkārpura.²⁰⁵

Many other gods and goddesses - 8 Vasus, 11 Rudras, 12 Ādityas and 2 divine physicians (Āśvinau) also had their abodes there.²⁰⁶ They were all worshipped.²⁰⁷

Puṣpāditya - set up by Yājñavalkya.²⁰⁸ was worshipped by people.²⁰⁹ It was the solar shrine of Camatkārapura.²¹⁰ It is highly praised for its merits.²¹¹

Māhika (or *Māhi*), a Śākta shrine of Durgādevī built by Māhikā or Māhi,²¹² is highly praised.²¹³

Nāgareśvara, a saiva shrine, was set up at Nagara.²¹⁴

Twentyseven Lingas (linga-shrines) appear to have very famous Śiva-tīrthas of Nagara (Camatkārapura or Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra).²¹⁵

SĀRASVATA VYĀKHYĀNAM

TĪRTHAS ON THE BANK OF THE SARASVATI

204. *Ibid.*, VI.154.1-2.205. *Ibid.*, VI.164.42.206. *Ibid.*, VI.155.1-3.207. *Ibid.*, VI.155.4-18.208. *Ibid.*, VI.155.20-30.209. *Ibid.*, VI.157.6,10-11.210. *Ibid.*, VI.Chaps.156-161; VI.161.4,7,13; VI.163.29.211. *Ibid.*, VI.161.14.212. *Ibid.*, VI.161.18-19.213. *Ibid.*, VI.164.26-29.214. *Ibid.*, VI.154.9; VI.164.12,22-23, 26a,28.215. *Sk.*, VI.164.10

Sarasvatī has been a very sacred river (nadītamā) worshipped by the sages living on its banks.²¹⁶ This Sarasvatī seems to be the sacred river of Ānarta flowing near Śaṅkha tīrtha and Brahmasilā.²¹⁷

Viśvāmitra also established his hermitage here and performed penances.²¹⁸

Puṣpāditya (*Sk.*, VI.164.30) a solar shrine was set up by Puṣpa on the bank of the Sarasvatī. It was also called as Nāgarāditya.²¹⁹

Śākambharī, a Śākta shrine of Durgā, was set up on the bank of the Sarasvatī.²²⁰

Śaṅkhātīrtha - a famous tīrtha of Camatkārapura,²²¹ comprised a śaiva shrine called Śaṅkheśvara.²²² It was also a centre of learning.²²³ Chapters 209 and 211 of VI deal with the Māhātmya of Śaṅkha tīrtha.

Śaṅkheśvara (*Sk.*, VI.209.49ff) was a shrine of great celebrity.

Vasiṣṭāśrama - Vasiṣṭa and Arundhatī had their hermitage on the bank of the Sarasvatī.²²⁴

Dhārā tīrtha - a Sakta tīrtha, lay not far from the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha.²²⁵ It comprised a majestic temple.²²⁶ It was a sacred current of pure water resembling that of the Gaṅgā, which filled the kunda with its water.²²⁷ It is praised for meritorious bath in it.²²⁸ After taking bath in it one should worship the goddess with devotion and sacrificial offerings.²²⁹ She is styled Kuladevatā of all the Nāgaras,²³⁰ whose visit gives pleasure to the goddess.²³¹

216. Ibid., VI.168.31-32

217. Ibid., VI.168.33-34.

218. Ibid., VI.168.33-34.

219. Ibid., VI.164.36

220. Ibid., VI.164.39

221. Ibid., VI.169.3.

222. Ibid., VI.169.7.

223. Ibid., VI.197.12-14.

224. Sk., VI.169.8-9.

225. Ibid., VI.168.55-56.

226. Ibid., VI.169.13.

227. Ibid., VI.170.4-5.

228. Ibid., VI.170.6-7.

229. Ibid., VI.17.8-12.

230. Ibid., VI.170.13

231. Ibid., VI.170.14

Cursed by Viśvāmitra, the pure water of the Sarasvatī was turned into blood. Hence the vasiṣṭha living on its bank left the place and went to Arbuda Hill,²³² and Viśvāmitra went to Camatkārapura.²³³

But the Sarasvatī regained its original state (of pure water) and sanctity by the efforts of Vasiṣṭha.²³⁴

Kamśāreśvara (*Sk.*, VI.174.1) or *Kamśārśvara* (*Sk.*, VI.176.16) represents a Śiva liṅga set up by Pippalāda.²³⁵

Yajñavalkyeśvara, a Śiva liṅga, was set up by Yajñavalkya in Hātakēśvara kṣetra,²³⁶ where he performed penances and worshipped the lord.

Pañcapindikā Gaurī (*Chaps. 177-178 of VI*) - was set up by Lakṣmī.²³⁷

Gāyatrī Tirtha (*Chaps. 181-182 of VI; VI.181.70-71; VI.182-1*).

Kapāleśvara - A Māheśvara liṅga, was set up by Brahmā.²³⁸

Rūpatīrtha (*Sk.*, VI.182.56).

Nāgatīrtha (*Sk.*, VI.183.27,41-42).

Puṣkara (*Sk.*, VI.190.10,21).

Jyeṣṭha kuṇḍa (*Sk.*, VI.190.36) or *Jyeṣṭhapuṣkara* (*Sk.*, VI.190.38).

Yaksamātīrtha (*Sk.*, VI.190.78-82). It is associated with the disease of Yaksmā.

Sāvitrī (*Devī Parvatāśrayā*) (*Sk.*, VI.192.90).

Tīrtha-dvayaṁ (two tirthas) (*Sk.*, VI.194.51; VI.195) viz.,

Pādukās (*Sk.*, VI, *Chap. 195*; VI.195.3ff) - were established by two maidens named Brāhmaṇā and Sūdrī.²³⁹

232. Ibid., VI.172.12-19

233. Ibid., VI.172.19B

234. Ibid., VI.173.15.

235. Ibid., VI.174.1,3; VI.176.1,12,16.

236. Sk., VI.175.16.

237. Ibid., VI.177.1.

238. Ibid., VI.182.42

239. Ibid., VI.194.20; VI.198.82-83.

Kūpikā (Gayā Kūpikā) of Hātakeśvara kṣetra, was also famous for the performance of Śrāddha.²⁴⁰ (Gayā-kūpyāśca Māhātmyam).²⁴¹

Bālamanḍana M. (Sk., VI.207.1-2).

Bālamanḍana Liṅga (M., Sk., VI.206.126-127ff) or Balamandanaka Tīrtha (Sk., VI.206.146-156) - This sacred shrine comprised a Mukhaliṅga having four faces.²⁴²

Liṅga-trayaṁ (Sk., VI.208.79.82b) viz., Gautameśvara,

Ahilyeśvara, and Śatānandeśvara (Sk., VI.208.89b-90a) - were established by Gautama, his son (Satānanda) and his wife (Ahilya).²⁴³

Chapter 208 (of VI) describes the famous episode of Ahilyā cursed by Gautama. She was relieved of it by the divine touch of Rāma. Even after this, Ahilyā went on pilgrimage visiting the 68 holy places of pilgrimage and worshipping these Liṅgas. She, then, arrived at Hātakeśvara.²⁴⁴ She performed penances here.²⁴⁵ It throws light on the history of Rāma-cult.

Śatānandeśvara - Satānanda, her son, set up a liṅga and worshipped it.²⁴⁶ Ahilyā, Satānanda, and Gautama performed penances at Hātakeśvara.²⁴⁷ Śiva, so pleased by their penances appeared in the form of a Liṅga named Hātakeśvara.²⁴⁸

Śakreśvara (Sk., VI.208.94a), was set up by Indra.

Viśvāmitra-hṛda (Sk., VI.269.121).

Viśvāmitriya tīrtha (M., Chap. 212 of VI) - Viśvāmitra caused a kuṇḍa filled with the water of Pātāla Gaṅga. He also set up a shrine of Sun (Bhāskara).²⁴⁹

Bhāskara (tīrtha) was noted for relieving the devotees of leprosy.²⁵⁰

240. Ibid., VI.205.7-9.

241. Ibid., VI.206.123-124.

242. Ibid., VI.206.149.

243. Sk., VI.208.83.

244. Ibid., VI.208.33-34.

245. Ibid., VI.208.40-42.

246. Ibid., VI.208.52-53.

247. Ibid., VI.208.56-63.

248. Ibid., VI.208.64-69.

249. Ibid., VI.212.8-10.

250. Ibid., VI.212.11.

Tīrtha named Viśvāmitra-jalāvaha lay to the north-west of Jalaśayī Deva.²⁵¹

Dhanvantari Vāpi (Sk., VI.212.12) - was caused by Dhanvantari to the north-west of Bhāskara tīrtha. Dhanvantari performed penances here worshipping the Sun-god.²⁵² The sacred bath in it destroys all the diseases.²⁵³

Ratnāditya - a solar shrine, was established by king Ratnākṣa of Ayodhyā.²⁵⁴ It is praised for its sanctity.²⁵⁵

Kuharāvāsa (Sk., VI.213.11) or *Kuharāśraya* (Sk., VI.213.76b) - was a famous solar shrine.

Śāmba also visited this shrine in the course of his pilgrimage.²⁵⁶ He worshipped the solar deity and here he set up the shrine called Śāmbāditya.²⁵⁷

Gaṇanātha (Sk., VI.214.1ff) - was established by Viśvāmitra.²⁵⁸

Narmadā-Amarakanṭaka - The ascetics were distressed to see blood-splrent Liṅga of Śiva which fell on the ground filled with water. They enshrined the Liṅga by the name of Amarakanṭaka. They caused that water as the river Narmadā,²⁵⁹ Where bath and ablutions are mentioned to be meritorious.²⁶⁰ The Amarakanṭaka Liṅga.²⁶¹ or Amarakanṭaka tīrtha on the Narmadā.²⁶² is highly praised for its sanctity.

251. Ibid., VI.212.39.

252. Sk., VI.212.12-14.

253. Ibid., VI.212.15-18.

254. Ibid., VI.212.53.

255. Ibid., VI.212.54-76; VI.213.1.

256. Ibid., VI.213.107.

257. Ibid., VI.213.112.

258. Ibid., VI.214.1.

259. Ibid., VI.259.1-5.

260. Ibid., VI.259.7.

261. Ibid., VI.259.6.

262. Ibid., VI.259.15-16.

PURĀNA ŚĀSTRA AND PRABHĀSA

पुराणामखिलं सर्वशास्त्रमयं ध्रुवम्

Purāṇas represent the entire Śāstra (Purāṇam akhilam sarvaśāstramayaṁ dhruvam) which deals with the glory of Nitya Śabda (Brahman) comprising śata-koti-verses. The entire Śāstra, Vedas, Vedāngas along with the *Padapāṭha* and the *kramapāṭha* of the Vedas came out from the mouths of Brahmā. The corpus of the eighteen Purāṇas also came out from the mouth of the creator, Brahmā.¹ Thus, Purāṇa or Purāṇas represent sacred texts.

VIṢNU GUPTA

O Namo Viṣṇuguptāya
Viṣṇurūpāya te namah.²

In a prayer to Mahodadhi (Samudra), reference to Viṣṇugupta is not without some historical significance associated with the king Viṣṇugupta, who figures in the literary, cultural and political history of ancient India.

Nalanda seal of Viṣṇugupta mentions Parama Bhāgavata Mahārājadhīrāja Śrī Viṣṇugupta, son of Kumāragupta II (or III) and grandson of Narasiṁhagupta.³ Dr. Sircar thinks that the missing name of the Gupta ruler in the Damodarpur Copper Plate Ins. (Select Ins.I, No.39), may be thought to be Viṣṇugupta,⁴ who ruled from c. 695 to 715 A.D.⁵ According to Dr. Basak Viṣṇugupta was the ruler of Magadha defeated by Yaśovarman.⁶

1. Sk., VII.i.2.4-5(i).

2. Ibid., VI.i.29.18(i).

3. Select Inscription, Vol.I, Ins. No.36B, p.340 11.2-4.

4. Ibid., p.347, note 5.

5. DKM., pp.304,309,310.

6. H.N.E.I., p.266

PRABHĀSA KHĀNDĀ - A TĪRTHASAMHITĀ

Prabhāsa Khanḍā is the seventh section of the Skanda Purāṇa. It is further divided into four Upa-khanḍas:

- i) Prabhāsa kṣetra Māhātmya (VII.i).
- ii) Vastrāpatha kṣetra Māhātmya (VII.ii).
- iii) Arbuda khanḍa (VII.iii); and lastly
- iv) Dvārakā Māhātmya. (VII.IV)

The Skanda Purāṇa is one of the most important texts that constitutes Śāstras (sarvaśāstrāṇām pradhānam skanda-kīrtitām).⁷

In the beginning Śiva is mentioned to have described it to Pārvatī on the sacred hill of Kailāsa. Parvatī narrated it to Skanda, who spoke it to Nandi who described it to Kumara and Kumāra described it to Vyāsa who described it to Sūta.⁸

It asserts that 'Saṁskṛta' Brāhmaṇas, i.e. those who had undergone the rites saṁskāras from Niṣeka (Garbhādhāna) to that of Śamaśāna are qualified to study the Śāstras.⁹

PRABHĀSA KHĀNDĀ

Prabhāsa Khanḍa is also mentioned as a Śāstra, which throws light on the Prabhāsa kṣetra, (śāstrāṇām prabhāsa-kṣetra dīpataṁ). It begins with salutations to Hari-Hara-Hiranya garbha (Trimutri, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā) as well as to Vyāsa-Vālmīki - Suka and Parāśara. It praises Purāṇa Puruṣa (Vāsudeva) and Someśa-Śiva who is the principal deity of Prabhāsa.

Prabhāsa Khanḍa is an important Tīrtha-samhitā which has preserved the names of tīrthas and temples, many of which had been destroyed. The names of places have been changed beyond recognition.

The entire section is mentioned as a 'gopaniya Śāstra, which throws

7. Sk., VII.i.1.26(ii).
 8. Ibid., VII.i.1.27-30.
 9. Ibid., VII.i.1.23.

light on the sanctity and splendour of Prabhāsa kṣetra,¹⁰ which had preserved the relies of the past. For a conscientious arcaeologist, like Prof. R.N. Mehta of Baroda, to study them.

TĪRTHA AND TĪRTHA-CULT

In the post-Harappan period after the destruction of Lothal, a major sea-port of western sea-coast of India was founded at the sacred spot on the *Velākūla* called Prabhāsa Pattana, which was also an exalted sacred place associated with the life of Vāsudeva kṛṣṇa.

When Dvārakā was threatened by the deluge, Kṛṣṇa took his people to Prabhāsa, where He, himself gave up his body and departed to Vaikunṭha.¹¹

In the course of his tīrtha-yātra Balarāma also arrived at Prabhāsa after visiting the sacred places. He arrived here from the city and holy centre of Māhiṣmatī on the Narmadā.¹²

ANTIQUITY OF PRABHĀSA

Epigraphic references to Prabhāsa as a 'punya tīrtha' are found in the Karle and Nasik cave inscriptions.¹³ of the time of Nahapāna (C.119-124 A.D.). It shows the importance and celebrity of Prabhāsa as a great place of pilgrimage in the early centuries of Christian era. Rāshabhadatta (Uśavadata) went to Prabhāsa on pilgrimage and performed many religious rites.¹⁴

PRABHĀSA AND VĀSUDEVA KRŚNA

Prabhāsa kṣetra Māhātmya (vii.i) glorifies Prabhāsa-kṣetra and

-
10. Ibid., VII.i.7.87(ii)-88(i).
 11. Bhāgavata XI.30.10f.
 12. Ibid., X.79.21:
 13. Sel. Ins.(No.59), p.168, 1.2.
 14. Ibid., (No.61), p.172, 1.3..
 - Bhāgavata, 11.1-3.

other tīrthas of that region with special references to the shrine of Someśa (Somanātha). While glorifying the sanctity of Prabhāsa, it points out towards its importance by posing a question as to why Kṛṣṇa came here leaving the famous tīrtha of Dvārakā.¹⁵ which being a *Muktipuri*, was itself dear to Kṛṣṇa. It exhibits greater sense of devotion and sanctity to Prabhāsa. It is also evident from the title (PRABHĀSA KHANDA) of the Mūla-khaṇḍa, which also contains a sub-section styled Dvārakā Khaṇḍa (VII.iv). Dvārakā khaṇḍa itself, while summarising the life and functions of Kṛṣṇa, refers to the pilgrimage.¹⁶ of Vāsudeva who renounced his human body here at Prabhāsa.¹⁷

PRABHĀSA

Thus Prabhāsa, an exalted abode of siddhas (siddhāvāsam) was a tīrtha of great celebrity, where the Lord Śiva (Bhava) resides.¹⁸ Performance of different religious rites viz., snāna (bath), śrāddha and worship of Brāhmaṇas (Brāhamaṇānāñca pūjanam).¹⁹ etc. were deemed highly meritorious.

BHOJA AND SANCTITY OF PRABHĀSA ŚĀSTRA

Lord Kṛṣṇa observes that Prabhāsa is a sacred place (Prabhāsam sumahat-puṇyam).²⁰ while describing the tīrthas of Bhāratavarṣa (tīrtha-vistarāṁ- pṛthivyām yāni tīrthāni.....).²¹ Prabhāsa-kṣetra Māhātmya (VII.i) glorifies Someśa-Somanātha (Śiva) and Vāsudeva kṛṣṇa. It glorifies Purāṇas and Upa- Purāṇas.²² It maintains, throughout the importance of Abheda dṛṣṭi and glorifies different Purāṇic deities - Viṣṇu, Śiva, Brahmā, Surya, Śakti.²³ (Devis viz., Pārvatī, Durgā, Brāhmaṇī, Vaiṣṇavī and Raudrī etc.). It also mentions Pāśupata Ācārya Lakulīśa (Chaps.76, 79) and ten incarnations of Viṣṇu (Chap.81). The God Viṣṇu is styled Daityasūdana, who destroyed Daityas (Mleccha-Turks). Thus it reflects upon the age of Mihira-Bhoja who is also glorified in the Vastrāpatha Māhātmya (VII.ii).

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- 15. Sk., VII.i.9.21-22; VII.i.10.57.
 - 16. Ibid., VII.iv.1.11(ii)
 - 17. Ibid., VII.iv.1.13-14.
 - 18. Kurma P., II.34.16.
 - 19. Ibid., II.34.17
 - 20. Bhāgavata P., XI.6.36(ii).
 - 21. Sk., VII.i.3.2-3.
 - 22. Ibid., VII.i.Chap.2.
 - 23. Ibid., VII.i, Chapters 58-62 etc.

Bhoja I of Kānyakubja was also known by the title of Prabhāsa.

PRAMITI (CANDELLA RULER DHĀNGA)

Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa also refers to Pramiti of Candramas (Candrā-treya = Candella) gotra, who had destroyed the Mlecchas and Pākhaṇḍins (heretics) - vṛṣalas who were hostile to Brahma (Vedas) and Brāhmaṇas who are stated to be Śudra-kings:

Candellas also belonged to Candramasa and Candrātreya-gotra.²⁴

'Samjato Rohinīnātho yo' dhunā Varttate.²⁵ shows that Dhāṅga-Pramiti came to the rescue of the country, Vedas and Brāhmaṇas, when Mleccha-dasyus characterised by *mukta-keśāḥi* i.e. śikhāvihināḥ (having no tuft of hair on the head) and *muktakacchah*.²⁶ (without tying loin-cloth) i.e. Turuṣkas had invaded the country about 1001 A.D. i.e. during the Gaznavide raids, which had not spared Prabhāsa and Somanātha.

GLORY OF PRABHĀSA

The sacred forest and hill - region of Prabhāsa kṣetra on the sea-

24. Ibid., VII.i.19.69-72.

25. Ibid., VII.i.19.72.

26. Ibid., VII.i.58.41(i)

coast was a great religious centre aborned with Siddhas, Yaksas, Kinnaras, Vidyāharas and ascetics in the midst of beautifil trees laden with flowers and fruits on the Kṛtasmara hill where birds of different varieties and colours charmed the pilgrims. There was music - devine songs, prayers and muttering of Mantras. Vedic chants (Vedaghoṣa) along with the Yajñahoma with its fragrant smoke made the region fit for the performance of religious rites by Ṛṣis and ascetics engaged in the observance of fasts and meditation.²⁷ Such was the sanctity and serentiy of Prabhāsa that Paramātmā Kṛṣṇa Himself had arrived here to leave his mortal body. Nay He had arrived there to bless His devotees. Śiva (Soma) had also incarnated himself here. Such was the glory of prabhāsa - abode of Someśa (Somanath).

PRABHĀSA AND ARKASTHALA

That Light devine represented by the Sun and the Moon is also associated with the sacred region of Prabhāsa.

Solar Worship.²⁸ was also very popular and it was also a famous Arka-sthala where stood the great sun-temple (Sūryāyatanam).²⁹ While referring to Śambākhyāna (story of Śāmba), Skanda refers to the three famous sun-temples of Bhāratavarṣa set up at Mitravana in the past (Koṇārka), Mundīra and Kālapriya (not named here).³⁰, Śāmbāditya, the solar shrine set up by Śāmba in the Prabhāsa kṣetra was very famous.³¹ The place was called Śāmbapura.³² The Purāṇa mentions 68 solar- shrines set up at different places in Bhāratavarṣa under different names.³³ The name of the Bhāskara at Prabhāsa was svarṇa-vetasam (Prabhāsa svarṇavetaśam).³⁴ An other great sun temple of Lāṭa-deśa (southern Gujarat) called Dharmāditya,³⁵ was also important. One hundred and eight names of the Sun are also mentioned and these are to be recited by his devotees.³⁶

- 27. Sk., VII.i.22.1-29.
- 28. Sk., VII.i.Chaps. 11,17.
- 29. Ibid., VII.i.17.120.
- 30. Ibid., VII.i.100-2 (ii)-3; VII.i.139.11-12.
- 31. Uvud, m VUU,u,Cg,100 & 191
- 32. Ibid., VII.i.100.4.
- 33. Ibid., VII.i.139.13-29.
- 34. Ibid., VII.i.139.15(ii).
- 35. Ibid., VII.i.139.25(ii).
- 36. Ibid., VII.i.279.3-17.

PRABHĀSA AND BRAHMĀ-BHAKTI

The worship of Brahmā.³⁷ is also glorified along with enumeration of 108 sacred places.³⁸ associated with the cult of Brahmā. At Prabhāsa there was the famous shrine of Bālarūpī (Pitāmaha) or Brahmā in his young form (Prabhāse bālarūpī).³⁹

Thus, it is evident that Prabhāsa Khanḍa (VII) is an important text, which throws valuable light not only on the religious life of Saurāṣṭra; but it is also important for the study of religious life of early medieval India in all its aspects. Pilgrimage to Prabhāsa and Dvārakā was very popular as it is even today.

PRABHĀSA AND SOMEŚA (SOMANĀTHA)

Thus Prabhāsa kṣetra became famous in the three lokas and the people paid respects to it, but ignorant persons do not know the power and prestige of Prabhāsa due to illusion caused by His Māyā.⁴⁰ This 'Param kṣetra' of Prabhāsa is known only to Yogins devoted to the Lord.⁴¹ It is a divya Liṅga of divine lustre. Lord (Śiva) further observes that Prabhāsa is a kṣetra and I am kṣetrajña known by the name of Someśa.⁴² It is thus knowledge personified as is explained in the Bhagavad Gītā.⁴³ The Purāṇa further describes the salient features of Śaiva philosophy centring around the concept of Liṅga-worship.⁴⁴ deprecating the Pākhanḍas (atheists) devoted to Hetuvāda.⁴⁵ (Jains and Buddhists).

He left his avatāra-rūpa of Kṛṣṇa by taking seat at the root of Aśvatha (aśvatha-mūlam-āśritya), which represents Parama Dhāma (svadhāma-saṁsthite deve). The Deva-rūpa of Bhagavad-dhāma repre-

37. Sk., VII.i.105.2(ii), 6-15.

Ibid., VII.i. Chapters 105-106.

Ibid., Chap. 107 deals with the Bhakti (of Brahmā) VII.i.107.2-16.

38. Ibid., VII.i.107.78-103; cf. Padma P., V.29.132f.

39. Ibid., VII.i.107.79(ii).

40. Sk., VII.i.3.126.

41. Ibid., VII.i.3.127.129(i).

42. Ibid., VII.i.3.137.

43. cf. Bhag. Gita., Ch.XIII.

44. Sk., VII.i.3.134-136.

45. Ibid., VII.i.3.141-144.

sents Viṣṇoh Paramikā mūrti or Puruṣottama as distinguished from his incarnatory forms (Matsya-kūrmadirūpa).⁴⁶ The fifteenth chapter of the Bhagavadgītā also hails him as the root of Saṁsāra representing Aśvattha. Thus the Lord sat at His abode - *Ūrddhva-mūlam* of Sāṁsāra i.e. Aśvattham.⁴⁷ Prabhāsa,⁴⁸ associated with the life of Puruṣottama became a famous tīrtha of Bhāratavarṣa.

GLORY THAT WAS PRABHĀSA

Here we have, before us, the personality of the great saint, Vidura arriving at Prabhāsa in course of his pilgrimage.⁴⁹ Beginning from Hastināpura, he had visited the entire country, its sacred places adorned with shrines in the cities, forests and tīrthas. At that time Yudhishthira was ruling over the entire earth.⁵⁰ It shows the antiquity of Prabhāsa as a sacred place of great importance. Vṛṣnis, Bhojas and Andhakas (branches of Yādava family) visited Prabhāsa, they bathed there and performed religious rites making gifts, particularly, land-grants to Brāhmaṇas.⁵¹ Thus prabhāsa had become one of the most celebrated tīrthas.⁵² of Bhārata at an early date of Indian history and culture. It was situated on the sea-coast,⁵³ and it had its contact with the island of Pāñcajanya, the abode of Pāñcajana.⁵⁴

Arjuna had also visited Prabhāsa in course of his pilgrimage.⁵⁵

PRABHĀSA AND RELIGIOUS RITES

Kṛṣṇa-Vasudeva declared Prabhāsa to be a very sacred tīrtha (Prabhāśām sumahat-puṇyam).⁵⁶ where Candra, cursed by Dakṣa, was relieved of the disease of Yakṣma (T.B.) by taking bath here.⁵⁷ Hence,

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- 46. Sk., VII.iv.1.37.
 - 47. Bh.G., XV.15.
 - 48. Sk., VII.iv.23.85.
 - 49. Bhāgavata P., III.i.19(i)-20(i).
 - 50. Ibid., III.i.17-24
 - 51. Bhagavata P., III.3.25-28.
 - 52. Ibid., VII.14.31 (Cf. Tirtha List VII.14.29-33).
 - 53. Ibid., X.45.37-38.
 - 54. Ibid., X.45.40-43.
 - 55. Ibid., X.86.2.
 - 56. Ibid., XI.6.35.
 - 57. Ibid., XI.6.36.

Kṛṣṇa asked the Yādavas: "Let us all take sacred bath there and perform the religious rites of Maha-dāna (mahānti dānāni) and Tarpaṇa (ablutions) to gods and manes with devotion. Learned Brahmanas are to be fed with various types of very good food."⁵⁸

Religious Rites

Here in the statement of Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa, we find the directions to Yadus for the performance of religious rites at the sacred Tīrtha of Prabhāsa, which had already attained to its celebrity as a famous place and sea-port of great sanctity. These rites comprise 'mahā-Dāna' (mahānti dānāni) rites; which are the famous sixteen Mahādānas. The requisites of Dāna-dharma are also mentioned here. These are Śrāddhā and 'Pātra' which are very important factors considered by the Dharma-cintakas. Charity or acts of gifts like mahādāna etc. must be made to 'sat-pātras' viz., learned Brāhmaṇas of very high character. Similarly the person who gives (dātā) should also be a noble person and 'deya' (wealth etc.) should also be earned in a righteous manner. Such acts of charity, in worldly life the same way as ships, take us all beyond the sea (vṛjināni tarīṣyāmo danair naubhir iva arṇavam).⁵⁹ The verbal root 'tār' is associated with the concept of Tīrthas. It also denotes the act of sailing. Prabhāsa pattana.⁶⁰ was not only a mahā-tīrtha, but it was also an important sea-port of great commercial enterprise. The Roman commerce during the age of the Guptas led to the 'rain of gold' in the country and this gold was to be given in the acts of 16 mahādāna to the learned Brāhmaṇas who were engaged in teaching and preaching Dharma to people. Prabhāsa was also a great centre of education, learning and art. It was a Vaiṣṇava-kṣetra in the sacred forest of Raivataka hill called Vaiṣṇava-vana associated with Puruṣottama.⁶¹ The Skanda Purāṇa, however, does not give description of these rites which made valuable contribution in the development of religion, art, learning and society.

These sixteen Mahādāna-rites were performed in the past, by

58. Ibid., XI.6.37-38.

59. Bhg.XI.6.38(ii).

60. Prabhāsa-pattana was very important sea-port on the Western Sea-coast like Tamralipti of the Eastern sea-coast.

The word Āryaka is used for yādavas by Kṛṣṇa :

न वस्तव्यमिहाऽस्माभिर्जीविषुभिरार्यकाः । प्रभासं सुमहत्पुण्यं यास्यामोऽवैव मा चिरम् ॥
Bhag.XI.6.35.

Yādavas had migrated to Prabhāsa int eh company of Kṛṣṇa. Hence, it seems to have been named Āryaka. Periplus mentions it as ARIAKE and Ptolemy also mentions it.

61. Sk., VII.1.223.20-63.

Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, Ambarīṣa, Bhārgava (Paraśurāma), Kārttavīrya- Arjuna, Prahlāda, Pṛthu, Bharata and other kings.,⁶²

TEN PARVATA DĀNA

Among acts of charity gifts of mountains (mounds) made of different articles of gift namely Dhānya, ratna, guḍa, svarṇa, tila, kārpāsa, śarkarā, sarpi (ghee), Lavaṇa (salt), and rūpya (silver).⁶³ are also mentioned in the other Purāṇas.

DAŚA-DHENU-DĀNA

Like Parvata-dāna, daśa-dhenu dāna i.e. the gift of cows made of ten materials namely guḍa, ājya (ghee), dadhi, Madhu, Ambu, Salila (water), Ksīra (milk), śarkarā (sugar), ratna as well as a living cow⁶⁴ is also commended.

These rites of charity are to be performed at holy centres, tīrthas like the confluence of the Sarasvatī and the sea, or wherever there are Liṅga-shrines of great celebrity, where Vṛṣa- dāna should be given (viśiṣṭa-khyāta-liṅgeṣu vṛṣadānām vidhiyate). Here bath, worship of gods and acts of charities were to be performed. Following Iṣṭa-pūrta dharma construction of temples as well as repairs and gardens, wells for bath, and gifts to Brahmanas, particularly Bhūmidāna to Brāhmaṇas should be made.

Godāna and Hiranyadāna are very important. Rite of Mahādāna was to be performed at a famous tīrtha and Madhyama dāna should be given at a Madhyama tīrtha.⁶⁵

TITHIDĀNA AT PRABHĀSA

TITHI

DEYA (articles, or dravya
i.e. wealth to be given

62. Matsya, 274.11-12.

63. Sk., VII.i.28.92(ii)-93(i).

64. Ibid., VII.i.28.93.

65. Sk., VII.i.28.94-103.

	<i>Purana Sastra and Prabhāsa</i>	77
Pratipadā	Kāñcanam (gold)	
Dvitiyā	Vastra (cloth, like kambala etc.)	
Tṛtiyā	Medini (Bhūmidāna)	
Caturthī	Dhānyam (grains)	
Pañcamī	Kapilā (Cow)	
Saṣṭhī	Aśva (horse)	
Saptamī	Mahiśī	
Aṣṭamī	Vṛṣabha (Bull) - Nīla-Vṛṣabha	
Navamī	Grha (house) as well as Cakra, Śankha and Gadā.	
Daśamī	All scents.	
Ekādaśī	Mauktika (jewels or pearls)	
Dvādaśī	Pravāla Observance of vrata.	
Trayodaśī	Striyo deyā (dāsyā) maid-servants.	
Caturdaśī	Jñāna-dāna (vidyādāna) or Dharmopadesā	
Amāvasyā	Sarva-dānāni.	

Thus pilgrimage to Prabhāsa should be made along with Bhakti and Dāna (tyāga).⁶⁶

TĪRTHOPANIṢAD (TĪRTHA-MĀHĀTMYA)

The poet presents before us Śiva and Śivā, the latter asks the

66. Sk., VII.i.28.104-110.

former to describe the glory of tīrthas (*tīrtha-māhātmyām*),⁶⁷ which he does. He observes that visit to sacred places as well as bath and 'śravṇam' (of sacred texts of scriptures like Purāṇas, Bhagavad-Gitā or Tīrthamāhātmya etc.) at tīrthas is commendable religious act.⁶⁸ According to the desire of Umā Devī, Śiva also describes auspicious and famous tīrthas, which are twenty-eight in number. Naimiṣa (No.1) to Prabhāsa (No.28). This is very comprehensive and representative list,⁶⁹ which mentions the rivers Sindhu, Candrabhāgā, Airāvati, Vipāśā and Śatadru (as Śatabhadrā) - the sacred rivers of Pañcanda region as well as the Sarasvatī of Kurukṣetra, Śoṇa, Mahādevī (Mahānadi), Karnaveṇā (= Kṛṣnaveṇā), Godāvarī representing Dakṣināpatha, and Gaṅgā-sāgara- Sambheda, Kauśikī and Gayā (Pūrvadeśa), Māyāpuri (Haridvāra), Gaṅgādvāra, Kedāra, Himasthāna (Uttara Parvata, Kailāsa or Himālaya), Naimiṣa, Prayāga, Vārānasi (Antarvedī), Puṣkara, Prabhāsa and Dvārāvati (Paścima deśa) as well as Payodhi (Kṣirasāgara), Kapila (probably a tributary of the Narmdā), Devakhāta, Argha tīrtha (probably Arka tīrtha i.e. Arkasthala) and Carmilā. Thus the geographical horizon of Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa extends over the whole country. Prabhāsa is styled Mahātīrtha,⁷⁰ where Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva retired for his last līlā of his life after deserting Dvārakā.⁷¹ Śiva asserts that pilgrimage to these and other tīrthas brings liberation from rebirth.⁷² One must go to visit the sacred places for the growth of one's own religion. One, who cannot go there should meditate on them.⁷³ Śiva refers to Tīrthopaniṣada and Liṅgopaniṣada as well as to Yogopaniṣada.⁷⁴

Tīrthopaniṣada means visit to tīrthas and Liṅgopaniṣada means vist to Liṅga-shrines of Śiva as well as to 'Mukunda- liṅgālaya; (Viṣṇu temples) or other temples. Both these terms convey the idea of pilgrimage which, like Upaniṣads, help a sādhaka to realise Truth, God, and Śreya. It is the easiest path in the Kali Age, when people are mostly enveloped in illusion and ignorance due to their devotion to 'Rajas' and Tamas leading to craving for others' wealth and wife, violence and vices caused by Mithyā-jñāna, and Nāstika-vṛtti.⁷⁵

There are various types of tīrthas and Liṅgas.⁷⁶ Prabhāsa kṣetra

- 67. Sk., VII.i.3.90.
- 68. Ibid., VII.i.3.91.
- 69. Ibid., VII.i.3.92-97.
- 70. Sk., VII.i.3.97.
- 71. Ibid., VII.i.
- 72. Ibid., VII.i.3.98-100.
- 73. Ibid., VII.i.3.110.
- 74. Ibid., VII.i.3.111-121.
- 75. Ibid., VII.i.3.123.

is famous for its sanctity in the three lokas.⁷⁶ Here is the most exalted Liṅga characterised by three śaktis-icchā (desire), Jñāna (knowledge) and Kriyā (action). These are responsible for the creation of the universe, which is dissolved in the same Liṅga.⁷⁷ It is called Someśa styled kṣetrajña of Prabhāsa kṣetra where Śiva is also known as Bhairava.⁷⁸ Nāstikas and Pākhanḍas,⁷⁹ did not recognise the sanctity of Śiva.⁸⁰ They were Jains and Buddhists. Prabhāsa kṣetra is described by Śiva as very dear to Him.⁸¹

Prabhāsa-kṣetra And Kṛṣṇa's Dehatyāga

A very pertinent question is asked as to why Bhagavan Kṛṣṇa came to Prabhāsa for giving up his body after deserting Dvārakā, whih was itself very sacred kṣetra comprising thousands of tīrthas.⁸² In its own way, it eulogises the life and achievements of Kṛṣṇa.⁸³ On the other hand Kṛṣṇa, realising the great sanctity of Prabhāsa, came here and gave up his body.

Śiva observes that Prabhāsa kṣetra is a great Tattva-kṣetra combining in itself the divine elements (tattvāni) of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra,⁸⁴ which enhanced its sanctity. Every one gets Mukti at Prabhāsa.⁸⁵ The gods - Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Iśvara and Sadāśiva occupied respectively the five tattvas (Pañca-bhūtāni) viz., Earth, Water Fire, Air and Sky represented by tīrthas. It, too, added to the sanctity of Prabhāsa kṣetra. Tīrthas themselves came to Prabhāsa to pay respects to it, particularly at the confluence of the Sarasvatī and the sea.⁸⁶ There were many Upakṣetras,⁸⁷ tīrthas⁸⁸ and Liṅgas.⁸⁹ There was not a single point and place which did not comprise a tīrtha.⁹⁰

Recitation of various names.⁹¹ of Prabhāsa was deemed meri-

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- 76. Ibid., VII.i.3.126-127
 - 77. Sk., VII.i.3.134-135.
 - 78. Ibid., VII.i.3.136-138.
 - 79. Ibid., VII.i.3.139-145.
 - 80. St., VII.i.3.138; VII.i.4.9.
 - 81. Ibid., VII.i.9.21-48; VII.i.10.51.
 - 82. Ibid., VII.i.9.24-47.
 - 83. Ibid., VII.i.9.51-56.
 - 84. Ibid., VII.i.9.57-62.
 - 85. Ibid., VII.i.10.2-4.
 - 86. Sk., VII.i.10.26-30.
 - 87. Ibid., VII.i.10.42-46.
 - 88. Ibid., VII.i.10.47-56.
 - 89. Ibid., VII.i.10.26(ii)
 - 90. Ibid., VII.i.10.27.
 - 91. Ibid., VII.i.10.29.

toious. These names are: Ānartasara, Bhuvanabhūṣaṇa, Divya-Pāñca-nada, Siddha-ratnākara, Samudrāvaraṇa, Dharmākara, Kalādhara, Śiva-garbhaṇḍha, and Sarvadeva-niveśa etc.⁹² Among these names Sarva-deva-nivesa - abode of all the deities is very significant.

Prābhāsika kṣetra

In the Jambūdvipa, Bhāratavarṣa has its unique significance and sanctity as Karmabhūmi, where any person can realise bliss and beatitude by doing virtuous deeds.⁹³ It is the Kūrma-murti Bhārata divided into nine subdivisions.⁹⁴ Saurāṣṭra, a famous country, lies on the Naiṛta-pāda (i.e. South-West part) of the Kūrma-vibhāga.⁹⁵ Saurāṣṭra is also divided into nine parts and its ninth part near the sea is called Prabhāsa, extending for 12 yojanas in extent.⁹⁶ It is very dear to Śiva.¹¹

In the middle of Prabhāsa there is Pīṭhikā, five yojanas in its extent. In the centre of Pīṭhikā, near the sea, stands the Liṅga-shrine of Somanātha lying 300 Dhanuṣa west to the Kṛtasmara mountain.⁹⁷

Due to the divine lustre (prabhā) of Someśa, it shines and so it is called Prabhāsa. It was Ādi tīrtha and for the first time Light dawned here so as to give it the name of Prabhāsa.

Viśvakarmā, the divine architect, was also instrumental in getting the most lustrous light of Sūrya on this tract of land, so it was named Prabhāsa.

Indu (Moon) cursed by Dakṣa regained his lustre here, so it was called Prabhāsa.

Bhāratī Devī (Sarasvatī) brought Fire and dropped it, here, in the sea.

Learned Brāhmaṇas spoke in refined Brāhmī language here and their Brāhmī Bhārati still reverberates in this region. So it was called Prabhāsa.

92. Ibid., VII.i.10.30.32

93. Ibid., VII.i.11.6-15.

94. Ibid., VII.i.ii.18-19.

95. Ibid., VII.i.11.37.

96. Ibid., VII.i.11.38-39.

97. Sk., VII.i.11.40-42.

The ocean always shines here with its bright waves. So it is called Prabhāsa.

The God Sun always resides here in his visible form, so it is called Prabhāsa.

Here, Śiva fulfils all the pious desires of his devotees, so it is called Prabhāsa.⁹⁸

Ādikṣetra - Māhātmya

While describing Prabhāsa-Mahimā the Skanda Purāṇa portrays the life of Āditya (Sūrya) and his family (VII.1, Chaps.11-13). It also describes creation and the contribution of the Sun-God in the economic life particularly agriculture (Sūryabhūmisarīgambāj- jalotpattiḥ tataḥ śasyot-pattiḥ).⁹⁹ It glorifies Bhāskara- Āditya, who performed penances at Prabhāsa. It also throws valuable light on the sun-cult and iconography of the Sun-God. But the main aim of the Purāṇa is to glorify Prabhāsa-kṣetra styled Ādikṣetra.¹⁰⁰ in association with the glory of Āditya (the Ādideva).

Arkasthala (VII.i.13.4)

It was an important centre of Solar worship. The Sun-God styled Hiranyagarbha (Sun's lustre resembling gold) tracing its origin from the Ādyabhaṅga of Bhāskara (VII.i.13.6-9).

Its extent is mentioned to be five yojanas from north to south and from west to east. It is placed between the sea and the river Māheśvarī as well as between Nyāmkumati and the Kṛtasmara Hill (SK., VII.i.13.13-14)

Its Light spreads for 12 yojanas between the sea in the south and the Bhaskara-suta in the north. Rukmini tirthas lie in the east and in the west (Sk., VII.i.13.15-17). Such was the extent of the Suksma-Prabha of the Sun-God; and this sacred region represents that divine light which made it known as Adi kṣetra, where in the centre of this kṣetra stands the shrine of Siva (VII.i.13.18).

Thus, Prabhāsa is also known as Arksthala (VII.i.13.21), which may be identified with Ariake of the author of Periplus.

98. Sk., VII.i.11.44-53.

99. Sasya is important for the performance of Yajña, VII.i.11.65.

100. Sk., VII.i.11.59.

Siddhesvara

Thousands of Rsis lived here at Siddhesvara ksetra (marked by Siddha-linga, near Arkasthala (Sk., VII.i.14.29-32). There were other shrines, also set up here, dedicated to Devi Skanda and Ganesa (Sk., VII.i.14.17). It was thus an important centre of intellectual and spiritual culture. It was the hermitage of Yogācārya Jaigīśavya in a hill-cave called Jaigisavya-Guha, where ascetics performed penances and preached Jñāna-yoga and Siva- Bhakti (Sk., VII.i.14.8-24).

The sack of Somanatha by Garjanaka-Gajas (Ghaznavides) is also reflected in this section.

The activities of Rākṣasas.¹⁰¹ and 28 'Black Elephants (Timira-Dvipa).¹⁰² represent the incursions of alien invaders near the sacred region of Arkasthala.¹⁰³ They were crushed by the Lions (kṣatriyas). The success of Āryan rulers styled Candra like Soma (Śaśāṅka, Rohinī-nātha (Yaśovarman of Kanauj), and Pramiti (Dhaṅga) of Candrātreya (Candella) family was celebrated by the performance of Yajña at Prabhāsa (VII.i. Ch.23) and the construction (re-construction) of Somanātha Prāsāda.¹⁰⁴ (VII.i.24.56). The worship of Someśa and Vratas (vows, fasts) viz., Somavāra-vrata as well as Pāśupata yoga are also dealt with (VII.i. Chapters 23-29) along with the recitation of Śatarudriya (VII.i. Ch.30).

Sarasvatī

While glorifying tirthas and pilgrimage, the Purāṇa describes the course of the river Sarasvatī from its source to the western ocean near Prabhāsa, where it joined the sea (VII.i., Ch.33-35).

Pañcaśrotā Sarasvatī

The banks of the Sarasvatī were studded with tīrthas and kṣetras (VII.i., Chap.35). Here, at Prabhāsa, it had its five currents viz., Hariṇī, Vajriṇī, Nyaṇku, Kapilā and Sarasvatī.¹⁰⁵ The four ascetics viz., Hariṇa, Vajra, Nyāṇku and Kapilā performed penances at Prabhāsa and they were engaged in Svādhyāya. They caused these currents of Sarasvatī for their

101. Sk., VII.i.Chap.16.

102. Ibid., VII.i.16.6(ii).

103. Ibid., VII.i.16.3-21.

104. Ibid., VII.i.24.57-61.

105. Ibid., VII.i.33.58-62.

bath etc.¹⁰⁶ Thus the Sarasvatī became known by their names and it was Pañca- śrotā.¹⁰⁷

Nāradeśvara

It was a Śaiva shrine and tīrtha set up on the sea-shore near the Sarasvatī - Sāgara - Saṅgama.¹⁰⁸

Prabhāsa - Sarasvatī

This was the most sacred region representing a ladder to climb up to heaven (svarga-niśreṇī-sambhutā prabhāsa tu Sarasvatī).¹⁰⁹

Sāgara Tīrtha

Sarasvatī-sagara (Sarasvatyabdhi-Saṅgama - VII.i.28.94) was called Sāgara tīrtha,¹¹⁰ where as Sāgara (ocean) represents Bhagavān Viṣṇu.¹¹¹ Sarasvatī-yātrā was an important pilgrimage.

Tīrthas and Shrines at Prabhāsa (VII.i.)

Gandharveśvara (VII.i., Ch.26); Vimaleśvara (Ch.27), Agni- Tīrtha (Ch.29). This sacred spot marks the place where the river Sarasvatī brought the fire and dropped it in the ocean (34.31- 33).

Daityasūdana

It was a Vaiṣṇava tīrtha on the sea-shore Arghyeśvara, the Śaiva shrine set up to the west of Daityasūdana at the Saṅgama of Pañcaśrotā Sarasvatī (34.16-17). Everything is destroyed at the end of the Kalpa except Nyagrodha, Kalpavṛkṣa, Vaidūrya mountain, Daityasūdana-deva and a Śaiva shrine here.

Jaleśvara (34.24)

Daityasūdana-tīrtha (VII.i.81.3-4) was thus very important Viṣṇukṣe-

106. Sk., VII.i.33.49-51.

107. Ibid., VII.i.33.52-56.

108. Ibid., VII.i.34.15.

109. Ibid., VII.i.35.108.

110. Ibid., VII.i.35.111.

111. Ibid., VII.i.34.2-8.

tra situated in the form of 'Yava' (barely). Yameśvara temple was to its east; Someśa-shrine lay to its west; the Śākta shrine of Viśälākṣī lay to its north and the western sea lay towards south of Daityasūdana (VII.i.81.6-9). Rites and the western sea lay towards south of Daityasūdana (VII.i.81.6-9). Rites of 'dāna', homa, japa and tapa were performed by the people. Annadāna to a Brahmana, as a representative of Viṣṇu, according to Śāstra-vidhi was an act of piety (VII.i.81.11-12). Svārṇa-dāna to a Brāhmaṇa on the auspicious day of Dvādaśī in the month of Kārtika was also an act of merit (VII.i.81.14)

Varāha Tīrtha

It was a Vaiṣṇava tīrtha of Prabhāsa kṣetra marked by the shrine of Viṣṇu-Varāha set up to the left to Someśvara (Somanātha-Liṅga).

Prajāpati Brahmā (VII.1.38.5f)

It was a shrine and tīrtha dedicated to Brahmā set up to the right of Varāha (38.5). He had assumed the form of Kapardī (38.6). There were also shrines of Gajendrāsyā (38.30) or Gaṇādhyaṅkṣa (38.42), also called Kapardī because of his stomach resembling Kaparda i.e. a shell or cowrie (38.59).

Kedara Liṅga (VII.1.39.1f) near Bhīmeśvara (39.2) was previously called Rudreśvara (39.4), which had merged itself in the Kedāra Liṅga due to the fear of the touch of the Mlecchas. It was set up near the sea (39.5).

Mleccha-sparsa (VII.i.39.50) represents the touch of Mleccha (a Turk), who had defiled these sacred places. The coastal districts of Saurāṣṭra and Koṅkaṇa were invaded by Arab invaders as early as 636 A.D., when Thaha (Sthānaka) was invaded.

Rudreśvara

It was a Śiva temple set up at Thāna. Rama-sara (VII.39.27), a beautiful and sacred lake near the sea-coast, was near the sacred place named Sthāna adorned with a great temple (III.i.39.27-33) called Rudreśvara (VII.i.39.36).

Padmaka-tīrtha (VII.i.39.44) was also a sacred spot on the sea-coast.

Observance of Śivarātri vrata was an important Śaiva-rite (VII.i.39.36-57) to be performed here.

Bhīmeśvara (VII.i.40.1-3)

It was an important linga shrine. Śvetaketu, famous rājarsi, had set up this Ling not far from the shrine of Kedāreśvara. Śvetaketu had performed penances at Prabhāsa and set up the Liṅga (VII.i.40.6-9) at Sthāna called Sveta-ketvīśvara (VII.i.40.11). Probably this prosperous place called Sthāna- (sthānam mahodayam) is called Thana today.

AGNI TĪRTHA an up a tīrtha of Prabhāsa was visited by the Pāṇḍavas (VI.i.40.12).

Jāgeśvara

Bhīmasena also visited Prabhāsa and he worshipped this liṅga and himself set up a liṅga called Jāgesvara (VII.i.40.14) which was also known as Bhīmeśa (VII.i.40.15).

Bhairaveśvara (VII.i.41.1-2) was set up by the Sarasvatī near the sea-coast.

Caṇḍīśa was set up by the goddess Caṇḍī and it was worshipped by Caṇḍa (VII.i.42.1-2).

Ādityeśvara was set up by Āditya (the Sun-God) which was also known by the name of Ratneśvara (VII.i.43.1-3). It was famous for the performance of charitable rite named dhenuḍāna (VII.i.43.8).

Someśvara and the shrine of Umādevī as well as the shrine of Daityasūdana (VII.i.41.1-4) were also famous shrines and sacred spots of Prabhāsa kṣetra.

Below we give the list of tīrthas and Upa-tīrthas of Prabhāsa kṣetra:

Aṅgāreśvara (VII.i.45.1-9).

Budheśvara (VII.i.46.1-5).

Bṛhaspatiśvara (VII.i.47.1-9).

Śukreśvara (VII.i.48.1-11).

Śanaiścareśvara (VII.i.49.1-9).

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Rāhvīśvara (VII.i.50.1-8).

Ketu-liṅge (VII.i.51.1.5).

The above mentioned liṅgas from Ādityeśvara to Ketuliṅga were set up by Navagrahas (nava-liṅgāni grahānām, VII.i.5.1-10).

Siddheśvara (VII.i.52.2-6) were set up by Siddhas.

Kapileśvara (VII.i.53.1-4) was set up by Kapila, a Rajarsi,

Gandharveśvara (VII.i.54.1-6) also called Dhanavāheśvar was set up by a Gandharva named Dhanavāha.

Vimaleśvara (VII.i.55.1-5).

Dhanadeśa (VII.i.56.1-7) was set up by Dhamda (kulara).

Śaktipiṭhas

There were shrines dedicated to three goddesses representing the three Śaktis named Icchā, Jñāna and Kriyā.

Icchā-śakti represents Umā established at Prabhāsa kṣetra. It describes the glory of Śaktis named Umā, Gaurī and Parvatī styled Parameśvari and other goddesses named Bhairavī, Ajapāleśvari (Ajadevyah), Maṅgala devī, Viśālākṣī, and Lalitā (VII.i., Chap: 57 to 63).

Bhairaveśvara (Chap.63), Lakṣmīśvara (Chap.64), Vaḍaveśvara (Chap.65) on the Kṛtasmara hill, Arghyeśvara (Chap.66), Kāmeśvara (Chap.67), Gaurīśvara (VII.i.68.8) set up by Gaurī in the sacred forest called Gaurī-tapovana (VII.i.68.1-4) i.e. the place Gaurīsthāna, where Gaurī had performed penances was an important shrine glorified further in Chapter 69 (VII.i.). Similarly Gaurī-tapovana (VII.i.69.3) was also a famous holy centre. Varuṇeśvara (VII.i.Ch.70 and 71) was also an important place of sanctity.

Umeśvara (VII.i.71.3)

Vighneśa (VII.i.71.3).

Kumāreśvara (VII.i.73.2-6).

Śākalyeśvara (VII.i.74.1-3) was set up by the famous sage Śākalya, who was a famous Rājarsi (*rśinām rāja iti rājarsiḥ*). He performed penances here.

It was famous for the performance of the rite of Hiranyadāna (VII.i.74.6). It had its four names - Bhairaveśvara (in Kṛtyuga), Sāvarṇi-keśvara (in Tretrā), Gālaveśvara (in Dvāpara) and Śākalyeśvara (in Kaliyuga). Thus this Liṅga was famous in all the four ages (VII.i.74.6-10).

The God Śiva was represented in the form of Aghora-Bhairava. Hence it was called Bhairaveśvara (VII.i.74.19.20).

Śākala-Kaleśvara (VII.i.75.1) was also known by its four names - Kāmeśvara, Pulahēśvara, Siddhinātha and Nāradeśa, respectively in Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali ages (VII.i.75.2-3).

Due to noise of 'Kalakala' caused by the falling water of the Sarasvatī in the ocean it was called Kalakaleśvara. (VII.i.75.4-6).

Here, at the confluence of the Sarasvatī and the sea near the shrine of Kalakaleśvara, Nārada had performed penances and thereby he propitiated Śiva who bestowed upon him proficiency in the Gāndharva (Veda) i.e. music (cf. Samudra-gupta) along with *Sapta-svaras* (VII.i.75.8-9).

Lakuleśvara (VII.I., CHAPS.76 & 79).

Lakuliśa (a great Śaiva ascetic) had established two Lingas which were held very sacred (VII.i.76.1-2) Lakuliśa (representing Śiva) was himself worshipped here (VII.i.76.4-5).

Lakuliśa And Prabhāsa

Lakuli (or Nakuli) was an incarnation of Śiva (twentyeighth in the twentyeighth Dvāpara) at Kāyarohaṇa Siddhakṣetra during the age of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa and Daviāpyana Kṛṣṇa vyāsa. He was a great yogi who preached Śaiva religion and philosophy. Kuśika, Gargya, Mitraka and Ruṣṭa (on Kaurusya) were his four disciples who propagated the religion and philosophy of Pāśūpata yoga.¹¹²

112. Vāyu P., I.23.206-213.
Liṅga P., II.24.125-135.

Mathurā stone inscription of Candragupta II also refers to Mathurā as a centre of Pāśupata dharma.¹¹³ It refers to the Bhāgavat Kuśika.¹¹⁴

Lakuliśa had arrived at Prabhāsa from Kāyāvarohaṇa and here he performed penances in the Mahākṣetra of prabhāsa. He also taught Yoga and Pāśupata religion as well as Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika philosophy to his four disciples headed by Kuśika (Kuśakādīn).¹¹⁵ The temple contained the image of Nakuliśa.¹¹⁶ It was famous for the rite of vidyā-dāna to vipra.¹¹⁷

Uttāṅkeśvara set up by Mahātmā Uttāṅka (VII.i.77.1) Vaisvānareśvara-deva, also called Vahnīśa (VII.i.78.1, 7). It was a great temple (VII.i.7.3-10).

Gautameśvara

This shrine was built to the west of the temple of Daityasūdana (VII.i.80.1). It was worshipped by Śalya, king of Madrādesa (VII.i.80.2) who had performed penance here (VII.i.80.3).

Daityasūdana (VII.I., CH.81)

The chapter refers to the Devāsura war. Dānavas (same as Mlecchas) had caused havoc here. But the God, in the form of Varāha (same as Ādi Varāha or Bhoja I) had destroyed the Daityas (Muslims).¹¹⁸ Hence the God is called Daityasūdana, whose shrine and the sacred spot became the celebrated Viṣṇu-kṣetra.¹¹⁹

Many sacred rites viz., Dāna, Homa (sacrifice), Japa, Tapa, and Upavāsa particularly on the auspicious day of Dvādaśī as well as Prāṇatyāga were performed here.¹²⁰ Viṣṇu's incarnations namely Varāha, Matsya, Kūrma, Vāmana and Narasiṁha are also mentioned in the prayer recited by the gods.¹²¹

Cakratīrtha (VII.I., CH.82)

Viṣṇu after killing the Asuras with his Cakra had set up Cakra-tīrtha

113. Mathurā St. Pillar Ins. (61 G.E.) Line 5-9.

114. Ibid., lines 5-6.

115. Sk., VII.i.79.2-4.

116. Ibid., VII.i.79.2(i).

117. Ibid., VII.i.79.5.

118. Ibid., VII.i.81.15-22.

119. Ibid., VII.i.81.7-14.

120. Sk., VII.i.81.11-14, 36-50.

121. Ibid., VII.i.81.18-27.

(a tank) to wash his weapon Sudarśana. He had also caused eight crores of other tīrthas here. So it was called koti-tīrtha in the Krtayuga, Śrinidhāna in the Treta, Śatadhara in the Dvāpara and Cakara-trītha in the Kaliyuga. It was also called Sudarśana tīrtha where sacred rites specially Godanawas also performed (cf. Sudarsana Tadāga built by Candrogupta Maurya).

Yogeśvarī Śakti-pīṭha (VII.I., CH.83)

This chapter glorifies Yogeśvarī Durgā Mahiṣāsuramardani.

Ādinārāyaṇa (VII.I., CH.84)

A demon named Meghavāhana (Cf. Meghavahana-varmśa of king Khāravela) had destroyed the hermitages of Ṛṣis near the Southern Sea (VII.i.84.6) and persecuted the sages. Hence he was killed by Ādinārāyaṇa who is worshipped here, on the bank of the Sannihitā representing the sacred river of Kurukṣetra (VII.i.84.29). It was a pond created by Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa i(VII.i.85.9).

Pāñdaveśvar (VII.I., CH.86)

It was the Śiva-liṅga set up by the Pāñdavas on the southern bank of Sannihitā-kunda.

Ekādaśa-Rudra Kṣetra

Śūleśvara (VII.I., Ch.87), Nīlarudra (VII.I., Ch.88), Kapāliśvara (VII.I., Ch.89), Vṛṣabheśvara (VII.I., Ch.90) also called Brahmaśvara and Raivateśvara, as well as Ikṣvākiśvara set up by king Ikṣvāku (VII.I.90.13-16). Vṛṣabheśvara kṣetra was a famous Rudrakṣetra, where there were eight great tīrthas dear to Śiva namely Bhairava, Kedāra, Puṣkara, Drutijaṅgama, Kurujāṅgala (NK reding), Vāraṇasi, Kurukṣetra, Mahakāla (Ujjayini), and Naimiṣa.¹²² (VII.I. 90.22-23). Tryambakeśvara (III.I., Ch.92), Mahakāleśvara (VII.I., Ch.91), Aghoreśvara (VII.I., Ch.92), Mahakāleśvara (VII.I., Ch.93) also known as Citrāṅgadeśvara, Bhairaveśvara (VII.I., Ch.94) also called Caṇdeśvara.

Mṛtyuñjayeśvara (VII.I., CH.95)

Kāmeśvara (VII.I., Ch.96) was also called Ratiśvara Yogeśvara

122. Sk.P. (NK.Edn).88.22 :
Ibid., (SVP.Edn.), VII.I.90.22(ii)-23.

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(VII.i.97).

These, above-mentioned Liṅga-shrines and tīrthas represent Ekādaśa Rudras and these 11 Chapters (87-97) are called *Ekādaśa Rudrasaṁhitā*.

Cañdeśvara (VII.i, Ch.98) was also known as Pr̥thviśvara, Candreśvara, Somanātha (VII.i.98.29).

Cakradhara (VII.i, Ch.99) is placed to the east of Candreśvara and Dāṇḍapāṇi (VII.i.99.39), both representing Hari and Hara were tīrthas there.

Sāmbāditya (VII.i, Ch.100). This chapter glorifies the Sun-cult. A solar shrine was set up by Sāmba, son of Kṛṣṇa and Jāmbavatī at prabhāsa. This was also called Sāmbapura.

Chap.101 (VII.i) also deals with the story of Sāmba, and Sāmbaditya Māhātmya.

Devi Kāntakaśodhini (VII.i.102.1-2)

Kapālesvara (VII.i.103.1.f) was the abode of Pasupata ascetics.

Koṭiśvara (VII.i.104.1).

Someśa (Somanātha), Daityahantā (same as Daity-Sūdana), Balarūpi Pitāmaha (Brahmā), Arkasthala, Āditya and Prabhāsa- Śaśibhūṣaṇa are the six deities of Prabhāsa kṣetra (VII.i.105.2- 3).

Balarūpi Pitāmaha (VII.i.105.5.21) is glorified in this chapter. He, as a boy of eight years, arrived here at Prabhāsa, where he performed penance and also set up the famous Śiva-liṅga called Somanātha.

This was a holy place associated with the cult of Brahmā. It was the first place among all the tīrthas dedicated to Brahmā (VII.i.105.27). It had different names in different Kalpas. There are : -

Svāyambhu in the first Kalpa

Padmabhū in the second Kalpa

Viśvakartā in the third Kalpa

Bālarūpi in the Caturtha Kalpa,

These are the principal names of Brahmā (VII.i.105.28-29).

108 BRAHMA-TIRTHAS AND SHRINES

Name of Brahmā	Name of Tīrtha	Modern Identification
1. Suraśreṣṭha	Puṣkara	A very sacred place near Ajmer in Rajasthan.
2. Prapitāmaha	Gayā	Famous Sraddha-ksetra of Gaya Bihar.
3. Vedagarbha	Kānyakubja	Kanauj (U.P.)
4. Caturmukha	Bhṛgukṣetra	Bharukaccha or modern Bharocha.
5. Sṛṣṭikartā	Kauberī	
6. Br̥haspati	Nandīpuri	
7. Bālarūpi	Prabhāsa	
8. Surapriya	Vārāṇasi	Banaras, U.P.
9. Cakraṛeṣṭha	Dvārāvati	Dvārakā
10. Bhuvanādhipa	Vaidiṣa	Vidisha, M.P.
11. Puṇḍarīkākṣaḥ	Paunḍraka	Puṇḍravardhana in north Bengal, Mahasthan.
12. Pītākṣa	Hastināpura	Hastinapur, near Mavana in Meerut Distt., U.P.
13. Vijaya	Jayanti	Banavāsi, North Canara
14. Jayant	Puruṣottama	Puri, Orissa.
15. Padmahasta	Vāda	Tamluka, Distt. Tamralipti) Midnapur, Bengal.
16. Tamonuda	Tamolipta	
17. Janānanda	Ahicchatra	Ramnagar, near Aonla, Distt. Bareilly.
18. Janapriya	Kāñcipura	Kanchi, Tamilnadu.
19. Brahmā	Karnaṭapura	Karnataka
20. Muni	Rṣikunda	Rishikesh near Hardwar (Muni ki Reti).
21. Śrīnivāsa	Śrīkanṭha	Sthāṇveśvara or Thanesvar, Haryana.
22. Śubhamenkara	Kāmarūpa	Gauhati, Assam.

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23. Devakartā	Uddiyāna (Ucchriyāṇa)	Swat-valley, N.W.F.P. (Afghanistan)
24. Sraṣṭā	Jālandhara	East Punjab, Jullundher
25. Viṣṇu	Mallikā	
26. Bhārgava	Mahendra mt.	Eastern Ghat
27. Sthavirākāra	Gonarda	Guna, M.P.
28. Pitāmaha	Ujjayinī	M.P.
29. Mahādeva	Kauśāmbi	Kosam, near Allahabad, U.P.
30. Rāghava	Ayodhyā	U.P.
31. Virañci	Citrakūṭa	Famous tīrtha in the Distt. of Banda, U.P.
32. Varāha	Vindhya Parvata	
33. Suraśreṣṭha	Gangadvara	Haridvara, U.P.
34. Śāṅkara	Himavanta	
35. Śrucahasta	Dehikā	
36. Padmahasta	Arbuda	Abu, Rajasthan.
37. Padmanetra	Vṛndāvana	Near Mathura, U.P.
38. Kuśahasta	Naimiṣa	U.P.
39. Govinda	Gopakṣetra	Brindavan, U.P.
40. Surendra	Yamunā-taṭa	
41. Padmatanu	Bhāgirathī	
42. Janānanda	Janasthala	Vindhyanava
	same as Janasthana.	
43. Madhvakṣa	Koṅkaṇa	
44. Kanakaprabha	Kāmpilya	Kampila, Dist. Farrukhabad, U.P.
45. Annadātā	Kheṭaka	Kaira, Gujarat
46. Śambhu	Kratusthala	Kanakhala, U.P.
47. Paulastyā	Laṅkā	Ceylon
48. Hāṁsavāhana	Kāśmīra	
49. Vasiṣṭha	Arbuda	Abu, Rajasthan
50. Nārada	Utpalāvana	Bithoor, near Kanpur, U.P.
51. Śrutidātā	Medhaks	
52. Yajuṣām-pati	Prayāga	U.P.
53. Sāmaveda	Sīvalīṅga	
54. Madhupriya	Markaṭa	
55. Nārāyaṇa	Gomanta	Goa
56. Dvijapriya	Vidarbha	Berar
57. Brahmagarbha	Āñkulaka	
58. Sutapriya	Brahmavāha	Modern Bahamanabad in

59. Duradharṣa	Indraprastha	Sind.
60. Suramardana	Campā	Delhi
61. Maharūpa	Viraja	
62. Surūpa	Rāstravardhana	
63. Janādhyakṣa	Kadambaka	
64. Devādhyakṣa	Samasthala	Samataṭa. It should be identified with Santhal Pargana
65. Gaṅgādhara	Rudrapīṭha	
66. Jalada	Supitha	
67. Tripurāri	Tryambaka	Near Nasik, Maharaṣṭra
68. Trilocana	Śrīśaila	
69. Mahādeva	Plakṣapura	
70. Vedhanāśana	Kapāla	
71. Saurī	Śringaverapura	Singraur near Allahabad, U.P. Nimsar distt. Sitapur, U.P.
72. Cakradhāraka	Nimiṣa	
73. Virūpākṣa	Nandīpuri	
74. Gautama	Plakṣapādapa	
75. Mālyavān	Hastinātha	
76. Dvijendra	Vācika	
77. Dīvānātha	Indrapuri	It is the same as mentioned in the Indor Copper Plate Inscription of Skandayaputa which places it in the Antarvedī (Doab). The name of the Sun- god, Dīvānātha is also represented by the modern town of Dibai in the Bulandshahr district, U.P. Both Indor and Dibai are situated close to one- another.
78. Purandara	Bhūtikā	
79. Hamsabahu	Candra	
80. Garudapriya	Campā	Here we find reference to Campāvatī or Campā

		of South East Asia Kanauj
81. Mahāyakṣa	Mahodaya	
82. Suyajna	Putaka-vana	
83. Śuklavarṇa	Siddheśvara	
84. Padmabodhaka	Vibhā	
85. Lingī	Devadāruvana	
86. Umāpati	Udaka	
87. Vināyaka	Maṭṛsthāna	Mātīpura (Mandawar distt. Binjor, U.P.) Himalaya
88. Dhanādhipa	Alakā	
89. Govinda	Trikūtā	
90. Vāsuki	Pātāla	Dvīpāntara
91. Yugādhyakṣa	Kovidāra	
92. Surapriya	Strīrājya	
93. Subhoga	Pūrṇagiri	
94. Takṣaka	Srīmālī	Laddakh Punnagiri, near Tanakpur Diatalmora (M.P.) It seems to be Shamli, Dist. Muzaffarnagar, U.P.
95. Pāpahā	Amara	Amarakantaka
96. Sudarśana	Ambikā	
97. Mahāvīra	Naravāpi	
98. Durganāśana	Kāntāra	Kanti (modern Malhar, Dist. Bilaspur, M.P.)
99. Padmagrha	Padmāvatī	Padma Pawaya near Gwalior.
100.	Mrgalāñcchana	Gagana

Only 100 names are found. It appears that the copyist had left the text comprising eight names.

These were 108 names of Brahmā associated with different places where there were shrines dedicated to Brahmā under different names. But this Stotra (prayer) recited at Prabhāsa, brings vijaya (success) in his venture (VII.i.107.103-110). In addition to Bhūmidāna, it also refers to the gifts of 16 *Mahādānas* to be given here.

Pratyūṣeśvara (VII.i., CH.108)

It was a Śiva-liṅga set up by Pratyūṣa, one of the eight Vasus (VII.i.108.4), who were eight sons of Viśvā daughter of Prajāpati Dakṣa.

These eight Vasus are : Āpa, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara, Anala, Anila, Pratyūṣa and Prabhāsa (VII.i.108.7) and Pratyūṣa, the seventh, had performed penance at Prabhāsa and set up the shrine of Maheśvara (VII.i.108.8-10).

Mahāyogi Devala was born to him as his son (VII.i.108.10- 11).

Vṛṣa-dāna was to be given here (VII.i.108-15).

Bhiṣma (Pitāmaha) was also an incarnation of Vasu (Drona Parva 2.7) :

Anileśvara (VII.i.109.1-3) was set up by Vasu Anila.

Prabhāseśvara (VII.i.110-1-9) was set up by Prabhāsa.

Rāmeśvara (VII.i.111.1-6) was set up by Rāma (Dasarathi-Rāma) in Puṣkarāranya in Prabhāsa-kṣetra along with a kundā (tank).

Chapters	Contents	Remarks
38/44-54	Kapardīśvara M	Gaṇapati Māhātmya
39	Kedāra-liṅga	Mleccha-Sparśabhaya (VII.i.40.5)
	Kedāra-liṅga was set up on the western sea-coast near Somanātha, Padmaka- tīrtha.	Śiva-rātri-M.
40	Bhīmeśvara and Jāgeśvara	
41	Bhairaveśvara, Satī M.	
42	Candīśa	
43	Ādityeśvara	
44	Someśvara	
	Umādevī	
	Daityasūdana	
45	Āngāreśvara	
46	Budheśvara	
47	Bṛhaspatīśvara	
48	Vibhutiśvara	
49	Śanaiścaraīśvara	Śukra M
50	Rahviśvara	Sani-stotra
51	Ketu-liṅga	Liṅga set up by Rahu
52	Five-Siddhalingāni	Navagraha pujanam set up by Siddhas

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| 53 | Kapileśvara M |
| 54 | Gandharveśvara M |
| | Ghanavāheśvara |
| 55 | Agni-tīrtha |
| 56 | Vimaleśvara |
| 57 | Dhanadeśa M |
| | Three Saktis Viz., Varārohā, Amā and Umā |
| 58 | Gaurī-vrata |
| | Sakti M. - Yoginī-pīṭha |
| | Bhairavī, Devī-pīṭha |
| | Ajapāleśvarī Devī |

There is reference to Akhaṇḍamāṇḍalāṁ Candram (VII.i.59.27b) and all gods became subservient to Rāvaṇa, the demon king of Laṅkā. King Ajapāla is styled 'muktakēśam- muktakacchām'.¹²³ - same as muktakaccha-śikhāhināṁ which denotes a Mleccha-Turuṣka or a Muslim. It points to the advent of Muslims in Saurāstra.

- 59 Ajadevi

In the last chapters (38 to 59) we find the accounts of Śaktis and Sakti-worship as well as the propitiation of Navagrahas, who had set up Śiva-lingas in the Prabhāsa ksetra.

- 60 It also mentions three goddesses styled kṣetra-rakṣikās, named Maṅgalā (Brāhmī), Viśālakṣī (Vaiśṇavī) and Catvarā (Raudrī Śakti).¹²⁴ It glorifies Maṅgalā.

61 It glorifies Lalitomā-Viśālakṣī-Bhairavī Śakti.

62 It glorifies RudraŚaktī - Maharaudrī RudraŚaktī.¹²⁵

63 Bhairaveśvara

64 Lakṣmīśvara

65 Vadaveśvara set up on the Kṛtasmara hill (near Girnar, Kathiawar, cf.St.Sk.P., Pl.I, p.141)

66 Arghyeśvara

123. Sk., VII.i.58.41(i)

124. Ibid., VII, i, 60, 5-6.

125. Ibid., VII.i.68.1(i).

67 Kāmeśvara

Chapters (63 to 67) describe five Vakralīngas or Mukhalīngas.

68 Gaurīśvara set up by Satī (Kālī) who performed penances in this tapovana. She attained to gauratva (fair colour) by performing penances.

69 Glorifies Gaurīśvara and Gaurī Tapovana.¹²⁶

70 Varuneśvara

71 Umeśvara

72 Jalavāsa-Gaṇādhipa (Vighneśa)

73 Kumäreśvara Set up by Sanmukha

74 Śākalyeśvara. It was called Bhairaveśvara (in Kṛtyuga), Savarnīkeśvar (in Tretā), Gālaveśvara (in Dvāpara) and Śākalyeśvara in the Kaliyuga.

75 Kalkaleśvara

Narada's penance led to the acquisition of proficiency in music (gāndharvam bhūṣitam saptabhiḥ svaraiḥ).¹²⁷

76 Lakuleśvara set up by Lakuliśa,¹²⁸ who was worshipped here.¹²⁹ Here was the image of Lakuliśa (mūrti-mantam Lakulisam).¹³⁰

77 Uttaṅkeśvara set up by Uttaṅka

78 Vaiśvanareśvara (Vahniśa).

Here, it was an act of great merit to perform Pitrśrāddha (VII.i.111.14). A shrine of Sāraṅga-dhanvir (Viṣṇu) was also famous shrine built nearby in the Puṣkara here it was famous for Puṣkara-Srāddha-rite.

126. Sk., VII.i.70.1; VII.i.73.2(ii).

127. Ibid., VII.i.75.9.

128. Ibid., VII.i.76.1-2.

129. Ibid., VII.i.76.3-4.

130. Ibid., VII.i.76.4.

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Laksmaṇeśvara (VII.i.112.1-2) was set up by Laksmana.

Jānakīśvara (VII.i.113.1-2) which was previously called *Vasiṣṭheśa*. This was *Yugalinga*.

Siddheśvara (VII.i.113.5-7) was set up at *Puṣkara* (in *Prabhāsa* kṣetra)

Vāmanasvāmi and *Viṣṇu Pada* (Ch.114) were also famous tīrthas of *Puṣkara* (here).

Puṣkareśvara (Ch.115) and *Kuṇḍeśvarī Devī* (Ch.116) near *Śaṅkhāvarta* or *Śaṅkhodaka Kuṇḍa* were also famous tīrthas and shrines.

We are giving below only the names of tīrthas and shrines of *Prabhāsa* kṣetra along with the number of Chapters of VII.i :

Bhūteśvara (Ch. 117) or *Bhūtanatheśvara*, *Bhuteśa*.

Gopyāditya (Ch.118) when Kṛṣṇa arrived at *Prabhāsa* along with yādavas there, the place became known as *Yādavasthala* on the *Raivataka* hill. Temples were built and these represented the Kīrtistambhas of Kṛṣṇa who was accompanied by 1600 Gopīs. There were 16 chief Gopīs (names are mentioned) and each Gopī was divided into 16000. They built the sun-temple called *Gopyāditya* (VII.i.118.20) in the *Mitra-vana* of *Prabhāsa* kṣetra (VII.i.118.24)

Śakti-Piṭhas (Ch.119, VII.i)

Balātibala-daityaghñī Mahadevī (119.1F)

Due to dominance of *Asuras* and *Daityas*, who had defeated gods and had harrassed R̄sis, the Goddess appeared to destroy the demons.

There are references to degraded and censured religious sects: Nirgranthas, who preached *Dayādhharma*, are mentioned as *Jālma* (119.48).

Pākhaṇḍāśrama (Buddhist monasteries) were abodes of *Hetuvāda-parā* (119.49) people.

Kṣapāṇakas (119.60.9)

Bhindakas, condemned in *Śivaśāstra* (119.50b).

Kaulavratas devoted to evil acts like addiction to wine, women, and meat (119.51).

Such were Naīskṛtikās or sinful sects and people devoted to sensuous pleasures (119.52) : śiśnodara-parāyaṇāḥ. It mentions 64 Yoginīs, among whom the names of Vedārthajanani, Purāṇā, Ānvikṣīkī, and Sāṃkhya deserve special notice (119.56.62). Thus this chapter is devoted to the glorification of Devī (Śakti) worshipped by Tāntrikas with the offerings of wine, and animal- meat (paśu-mārīṣāsavaīś caiva). This was known as Āsurika (on Tāmasika) Bhakti. Sātvika-bhakti of the goddess Ambikā leads to divinity (119.68-70).

Chapter	Tirtha	Deities	Special Remarks
120	Gopīśvara		Set up by the Gopīs who worshipped Śiva to get a son born to them.
121	Rāmeśvara		Set up by Jāmadagnya Rāma who performed penances here to get rid of the sin associated with the murder of his mother Renukā.
122	Citrāṅgadeśvara		Set up by a Gandharva named Citrāṅgada.
123	Rāvaneśvara		Set up by Rāvaṇa in the śivakṣetra of Prabhāsa comprising the great shrine of Someśa (Somanātha).
124	Gaurī		Saubhāgya dāyini.
125	Paulomiśvara		Set up by Paulomī (consort of Indra who was harrassed by the demon Tāraka killed by Kārtikeya.
126	Śāṇḍilyeśvara		Set up by Śāṇḍilya.
127	Kṣemeśvara		Set up by the king named Kṣemamūrti, who may be identified with the Magadhan king named Kṣema.
128	Sāgarāditya		A solar shrine set up by the famous king named Sagara whose glory is sung in the Puranas. It deals with the Sun-cult and muttering of 21 names recorded here (VII.i.128.19-21).
129	Akṣamālēśvara		Known by the name of Ugraseneśvara. Akṣamālā was the wife of Vasiṣṭha called Arundhatī. Ugraseneśvara - worshipped by Ugrasena father of Kaṁsa called Asura.
130	Pāśupateśvara Deva	also known as Samtoṣeśvara.	It was a famous centre of Pāśupatas. The four great Munis named Vāmadeva, Sāvarṇī, Aghora and

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Kapila were represented in the Liṅga, which seems to be Caturmukha-Liṅga (VII.i.130.i). It was set up in Śrīmukhavana called Lakṣmi-sthāna, which was the abode of Siddha-Yogins (VII.i.130.7-9). Mahānala-liṅga (VII.i.130.66).

131 Dhruveśvara (130.67; Chap.131)
Anādiśa

132 Siddhalakṣmī-piṭha associated with the Śakti-cult. It was Prabhāsa piṭha called Saurāstra piṭha. Other famous Sakti-pithas were at Jalandhara, Kamarupa, Rudra-Nṛsimha pitha and Kasmira (VII.i.132.3-8).

133 Mahākālī-piṭha

134 Puṣkarāvartaka-nadī. This chapter glorifies the sanctity of Puṣkara-tīrtha.

135 Śitalā-Devi Duhkhāntakāriṇī.

136 Lomaśeśvara set up by Lomaśa Ṛṣi.

137 Kṣetrapāla Kaṇkāla - Bhairava.

138 Trīṇibindviśvara

139 Citrāditya. This chapter glorifies the Sun-worship and it mentions the names of 68 shrines set up in different parts of the country.

This is an exhaustive tīrtha samhitā, which mentions tīrthas of different regions of Bhāratavarṣa in the different lists of tīrthas. It also mentions the name of temples dedicated to different deities at different places. We will deal with these tīrthas which are also mentioned elsewhere. Hence in order to avoid repetition, we will deal with them in the last Chapter called 'Tīrtha-saṃgrah'.

VASTRĀPATHA MĀHĀTMYA (VII.II)

Vastrāpatha-Māhātmya also glorifies the tīrthas of Saurāstra with special reference to Raivatka - mountain and the forest which had overgrown there. It is mentioned as a beautiful forest sanctified by the river Suvarṇarekhā, which may be identified with the river Suvarṇasiktā mentioned in the Junagarh Rock Inscription of Śaka Mahā Kṣatrapa Rudradāman I.

It opens with the glimpses of the sanctity of Gādhinagara (kanauj) which was situated on the bank of the Gaṅgā adorned with many sacred spots where kings and saints performed penances.

Then, it is presented before us the grand personality of Bhoja (Mihirabhoja) of Kānyakubja Mahādeśa (great empire), which extended from Prabhāsa to Bihar in the east. He had transformed the Kali Age into Punyayuga, fully justifying the statement that a king is the maker of his own age :

rājā kālasya kāraṇam.

Charmed by the glory of Prabhāsa kṣetra, Bhoja I wanted to abdicate the throne in the favour of his son, so that he may go on pilgrimage. But advised, very rightly, by his preceptor named Sarasvata, he did not abdicate, though he went on pilgrimage. Those were the days when Asuras and Mlecchas were repeatedly trying to conquer India with their base in Sind and Multan as well as from the Kabul-valley towards Āryāvarta. But they failed in the venture.

Bhoja I and his son Mahendrapāla and also, to some extent, Mahipala gava protection to country and culture against the Muslim invasions.

There are accounts of Ascetics and their hermitages (Āśramas) as well as tīrthas and temples which were threatened by the iconoclasts.

Vastrāpatha Māhātmya (VII.II)**Dāmodara.**¹³¹

There was a shrine dedicated to Dāmodara (Damodaragr̥ha).¹³² i.e. Kṛṣṇa built on the Raivataka giri of Saurāṣṭra.

Raivalaka-giri (Girnar) along with the sacred river Suvarṇa-rekhā and the forest (Raivataka-vana) was very sacred region called Raivataka-kṣetra,¹³³ which was also known as Vastrāpatha-kṣetra glorified in this section.

It was adorned with many sacred places viz., Dāmodara (Dāmodara-tīrtha),¹³⁴ Dāmodarapura,¹³⁵ which was situated on the sacred hill Ujjayanta, a part of the Raivataka mountain. It was placed on the bank of the river Svarṇa-rekhā.¹³⁶

There were also other sacred places :

Brahmakuṇḍa.

Brahmeśvara (Śiva-temple)

Kālamegha

Kālikā

Indreśvara

Kumbhiśvara

Bhīmeśvara.¹³⁷

Gaṅgeśvara (Sk., VII.II, ch.5)

131. Sk., VII.I.1.93-99.

132. Ibid., VII.II.1.105.

133. Ibid., VII.II.1.2-3.

134. Sk., VII.II.1.78.

135. Ibid., VII.II.1.90.

136. Ibid., VII.II.3.2-4.

137. Ibid., VII.II.Ch. 3.

Cakratīrtha

It was here that a lady with the face of O deer was noticed by the Vanapāla, who reported the matter to Bhoja (First, Mihirabhoja) of Kānyakubja.

The lady described the glory of Svarnarekhā. Bhojaraja was highly inspired to perform pilgrimage to that sacred region, so much so, that he wanted to abdicate the throne. He was prepared to go on pilgrimage. But he was dissuaded by his preceptor. At the end of discussion Bhoja paid visit to Vastrāpatha kṣetra without renouncing *svadharma*.¹³⁸

Thus the Vastrāpatha kṣetra (Raivataka-vana) near Girnar of Surāstra is highly eulogised. It formed a part of the empire of Bhoja I and Mahendrapāla.

DHARMAPĀLA (VIKRAMAŚILA)

Before the coming of Bhoja I on the political stage of Āryāvarta, Dharmapāla, a great conqueror and administrator had established far more extensive empire, which gave to North India, a single government and uniform administration based on the policy of religious tolerance.

It was the period when Arab conquerors and rulers of Yavana-*desa* in Sind were trying to extend their sway. They were defeated and made subservient to Dharmapāla. Yavanas defeated by Dharmapāla had attended the court held at Kanauj.

Skanda mentions Vikramaśila,¹³⁹ who is to be identified with Dharmapāla.

It also mentions other tīrthas of the country, which are given below: (these two figures denote the chapter and verse of VII.ii).

Gangā (VII.ii.1.7; VII.ii.7.2.13)
Bādaryāśrama (1.33)
Kānyakubja (1.49)

138. Ibid., VII.ii.Chap. 6 to 11.

139. Sk., VII.ii.17.155. For further details see my "History From the Purāṇas".

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Arbuda (1.50)

Gayā (1.51)

Prabhāsa (1.53,58,66)

Vārānasi (1.66, II.ii.2.7)

Somanātha (1.68)

Udayanta giri (1.68; II.ii.3.4)

Raivataka-mountain (1.68, II.ii.3,4,5,8)

Kurukṣetra (2.7)

Godāvari (6.113)

Kanyakā-vana (7.2) on the Ganges around Kanyakubja.

Prayāga (7.13)

Kedāra (7.13)

Puṣkara (7.13)

Dvāravati (7.14)

Sarasvatī (7.35)

Tāpi (7.35)

Kailāsa mountain (9.42,150)

Himālaya (9.43)

Gaṅgādvāra (9.73,104)

Mandara (9.150)

Ujjayini (12.31)

Mathurā (12.32) placed on the river Kalindi (Yamuna).

Vāmana-nagara in Dvīpāntara (VII.ii.19.29-31).

ARBUDA KHANDA (VII.III)

This sub-section of the Prabhāsa-khanda glorifies Arbudācala.¹⁴⁰ Arbuda-mountain modern Abu of Rajasthan, which had witnessed many ups and downs in her history from the pre- historic days to the present age.

It is associated with the Kula-Pārvata of Pāriyātra.¹⁴¹ which formed the southern boundary of Madhyadeśa (Aśvaghoṣa- Saundarānanda). Hence it is related with the Ānarta to its south.¹⁴² and Avanti towards its east.¹⁴³ Hence, the history of Arbuda janapada (or Arbuda-people, the vanacaras (forest tribes viz Bhillas etc.) of Arbudāranya is associated with the history of Avanti (Mālavā) and Ānarta. The history of Mahavīra-Rajputs

140. Sk., VII.iii, Chapt.3.

141. Brahma P., 19.17-18(i).

142. Vāyu., I.45.13(i).

143. Mārkaṇḍeya, 57.53.

is the part and parcel of the history of the Arbudas. The scholars who discussed *Agni-Kula theory* of the origin of Rajputs - Dr. R.B. Singh, Dr. D.Sharma and Dr. V.S. Pathak did not study the Skanda Purāna.

The entire region was very sacred adorned with hills, dales, rivers and forests, which provided the environment fit for the performance of Yoga and Tapas by ascetics. Vasiṣṭha had also set up his hermitage here. There were hundreds of ascetics and Āśramas. The forest-tribes helped these ascetics with devotion. This sacred forest was the *rakṣāranya* of Hindu culture.

Guhilas played very important role in checking the flood of Arab-armies.

Agnikula-theory has been studied, without studying the Purāṇas, which, in their present form, had inspired kṣatriyas to adhere to Kṣātra dharama i.e. protection of people and Dharma. The Yajña meant purification and rejuvenation.

Arbudāranya has been *rakṣāranya* (asylum) of Viśvas, Viśradharma and Hindu cultural traditions. It was one of the great centres of Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva ascetics who met together to discuss as to how they could save the culture against the deluge.

GHORA-KALIYUGA AND MLECCHAS

It was an age of great crisis (Ghora-kaliyuga).¹⁴⁴ due to the invasions of Mlecchas or Turks who had despoiled and defiled the sanctity of Tīrthas and Temples.¹⁴⁵ But the sacred hill region of Arbuda (Arbudāranya) was not touched by the Kali.¹⁴⁶ Hence, the tirthas and saints (of Yavana-deśa, part of Sind conquered by Arabs) flocked to this Rakṣāranya.¹⁴⁷

144. Sk., VII.iii.10.23.

145. Ibid., VII.iii.10.30.

146. Ibid., VII.iii.10.32-33.

147. Ibid., VII.iii.Chap.10.

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BAHU-VIPRA-SAMAVĀYA (A GREAT CONFERENCE OF SAINTS & SAGES)

There was a great conference of many Vipras (sages) and Rṣis (bahu-vipra-samavāye parvate' smin).¹⁴⁸ or bahuvipra- samāgama).¹⁴⁹ These Vipras (Brāhmaṇas) were highly learned in Dharmaśāstras, Vedas, Vedāṅgas and politics.¹⁵⁰ They preached Kṣātradharma. They exhorted Kṣatriyas to destroy the enemies (kṣatriyas ca viśeṣena ya icchec-chatru-saṅkṣayam).¹⁵¹ These enemies were Mlecchas, who were destroying tīrthas and temples.¹⁵² Thus gods (bhūdevas) and Indra (kings, princes) were deep struck by the terror due to the destructive role of Muslim invaders, met in the solitary places to decide the action and to design the plans.¹⁵³ They had to find out a leader of extra-ordinary valour and they found Vināyaka.¹⁵⁴ (Viśeṣa-nāyaka ī, NĀGABHĀṭA I) and Mahāvināyaka (Nāg-abhaṭa II) as well as Asurāntaka, Bhoja I.

The following tīrthas are mentioned in the Arbuda Khaṇḍa (VII.iii). These were the holy centres of Arbudāraṇya-Arbuda (Sk., iii.1.6,7; 3/12) Arbuda Hill (VII.iii.5.6; 12/4; 31/19)

It is a famous hill called Abu in Rajasthan.

Sarasvatī (nadi) (VII.iii.1.21). It was flowing near the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha.

Nāgatīrtha (VII.iii.3.29). It was also called Nāga-hṛda (37/1,21) a lake.

Gomati (VII.iii.3.18)

Mandakini (VII.iii.3.18)

Bhadrakarṇa-hṛda (a lake) (VII.iii.8.1)

Kedāra (VII.iii.9.1). It was the Śaiva-temple built at the confluence of the Mandakini and the Sarasvatī in Arbuda forest.

148. Ibid., VII.iii.35.52.

149. Ibid., VII.iii.36.199.

150. Ibid., VII.iii.48.19-20.

151. Ibid., VII.iii.49.16.

152. Ibid., VII.iii.50.2-5.

153. Sk., VII.iii.52.5.

154. Ibid., VII.iii.52.30.

DWĀRAKĀ MĀHĀTMYA (VII.IV OF SKANDA P.) (GLORY OF DVĀRAKĀ)

The Dwārakā Māhātmya (VII.iv) is the last section of the Skanda Purāṇa. It glorifies Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇapuri Dwāraka. It begins with the summary of the life of Kṛṣṇa. It runs thus:

- i) Kṛṣṇa's Āvirbhāva (advent of the Lord Kṛṣṇa - VII.iv.1.4.
- ii) He is taken to Nanda-vraja)
- iii) Pūtanā-Śoṣanam) Vrajabhumi - VII.iv.1.5
- iv) Trṇāvarta-badha)
- v) Śakaṭa-parivartanam)
- vi) Kāliya (nāga) - damana) VII.iv.1.6
- vii) Pralamba-badha)
- viii) Lifting of Govardhana Śaila)
- ix) Discomfiture of Indra)
- x) Surabhyābhiseka) VII.iv.1.7
- xi) Rāsa-kridā)
- xii) Keśi-badha)
- xiii) Visit to Mathurā - destruction of Kuvalayāpidā (elephant) and Mallarāja.
- xiv) Kamsa-badha and Ugrasena's rājyābhiseka.
- xv) Destruction of (Kāla) Yavana and Caidya-king Śisupāla. Yudhiṣṭhīra's coronation marks the dawn of Dharmarjya.

Destruction of Yavana i.e. Kalayavana or the Yavana belonging to Kālayavana dvīpa represents the destruction of Arab governor or ruler of Sindh by some Kṣatriya ruler of Saurāṣtra, probably the Rāṣtrakuta ruler Kṛṣṇa (II).

KĀLAYAVANAS

Kāla-Yavanas hold an important key to solve the problem of Purāṇic chronology. Kālayavaṇa is mentioned to have invaded Mathurā and Kṛṣṇa is stated to have run away in fear. The former followed Kṛṣṇa who took shelter in a cave where at the mouth of the cave king Mucukunda was sleeping.

Kālayavaṇa thought that Kṛṣṇa was sleeping there. He kicked Mucukunda and thus he was aroused from the sleep. The very sight of Mucukunda disposed off Kālayavaṇa who was burnt. Thus Kṛṣṇa's

diplomatic game led to the death of Kālayavana.

None of the Purāṇic scholars took any heed of Kāla-yavana, who was a Muslim invader.¹⁵⁵ who attacked Mathurā. The Skanda Purāṇa mentions an incident in which Yavanas associated (preceded by kāla) had killed Kāśirāja in a battle.¹⁵⁶ This was also the invasion of Kāśi by Kālayavanas, who were Mohammadans styled *Black-Yavanas* (*Yavanāḥ kṛṣṇāḥ*), as compared with the Bactrian Greeks or Indo-Greeks who were white in colour.

Dandi's Daśakumāra carita mentions Kālayana dvīpa, which may be identified with Arabia.

Scared by the evils of the Kali,¹⁵⁷ and terrorised by the Mleccha-kings,¹⁵⁸ sages sought Lord Viṣṇu for their protection. Dvārakā is described as the adhiṣṭhāna of Bhagavān (adhiṣṭhānam Bhagavataḥ).¹⁵⁹ It lies on the coast of the Western Sea where the river Gomati meets the sea. It was called Kuśasthalī founded by Kuśa. It was also known as Dvārāvatī, famous tīrtha city in the janapada of Ānarta.¹⁶⁰ Hari is believed to reside there in the forms of His images.¹⁶¹ Thus it is evident that Dvārakā was, as it is even today, a celebrated Vaiṣṇava kṣetra.

There are references to king Indradyumna in this section dealing with the glorification of Dvārakā and Kṛṣṇa based on Kṛṣṇa-kathā.¹⁶²

In the NK. Edition of the text, we have a few additional verses which reflect upon the coming deluge in the wage of Muslim menace. These verses refer to a talk between Indra and his principal counsel, Brhaspati:

पूर्वं हि देवराजेन बृहस्पतिरुदारधीः।
प्रणम्य परया भक्त्या पृष्ठश्च महामतिः॥
चतुर्युगं यथाभार्गेधर्मवृद्धिं जनो लभेत्॥

155. Select Inscription, Vol.II.p.138, note 129. Madanpcidā copper plate Inscription of Suryasena, p.27.

स गर्गयवनान्वयप्रलयकालरुद्रो नृपः

J.A.I.H, III pp.141ff

156. Sk., VI.88.18,

157. Ibid., VII.iv.1.1-26, 50-52.

158. Ibid., VII.iv.1.51(ii).

159. Sk., VII.iv.2.21.

160. Ibid., VII.iv.2.3-4.

Thus, the Skanda Purāṇa, like other Purāṇas were preaching to people to observe sva-dharma as well as Deśa-dharma. Paurāṇikas were trying to stimulate national consciousness. Kṣatriya-vīras were also trying their best to resist the Kālayavanas - the Garjanaka Gajas. As such Pramiti is mentioned in the Purāṇas as the saviour of Āryāvarta.

HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE SKANDA PURĀΝA

Skanda Purāṇa, the most voluminous text of the whole series, is also an important text for the study of Indian history and culture just before the advent of Muslim rule in India. It discusses as to how this (sacred) country was occupied by the Mlecchas.¹⁶¹ Purāṇas, as such, have not been assessed for their value in the reconstruction of Early Medieval India. Out defective receivers failed to receive the message transmitted by the Purāṇas. The observations to Buhler that the account of future kings in the Vāyu-purāṇa, Viṣṇu, Matsya, and Brahmāṇḍa seems to stop with the Imperial Guptas, led scholars to believe that the Purāṇic accounts ended in 4th century A.D.¹⁶² Dr. Hazra also holds that An examination of the extent Mahāpurāṇas shows that the custom of recording new dynastic history ceased with the early Guptas, after whom no important dynasty or monarch of India has been mentioned or described in the Purāṇas. This proves that from the Gupta period the Purāṇic tradition took, in practice, a new trend which culminated in turning the Purāṇas into books of Myths and legends and Smṛti topics with highly imperfect and sometimes forged genealogical lists".¹⁶³ with these observation Dr. Hazra adds that "Nothing is said about any dynasties of the Kali age".¹⁶⁴ But out studies reveal references to Buddha (Budhagupta), Pramiti (Dhahaga?) Āma (Nāgabhaṭa II), Bhoja (Pratihāra ruler of Kanauj) and Kāśirāja Candradeva, the Gahaḍavāla ruler.¹⁶⁵ The concept of Kali age is also not properly understood by modern scholars. It ordinarily represents an age of decline, like the one which followed the collapse of the Gupta Empire.¹⁶⁶ In such epoch appeared Rājā Soma.¹⁶⁷ (Śāśānka), Champion of Brahmanical culture. Pramiti was

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- 161. Ibid., VII.iv.2.5.
 - 162. Ibid., VII.iv.23., 1-3; VII.iv.24.94-95.
 - 163. Awasthi, A.B.L., Studies in Skanda Purana, Pt.I., pp.220-231.
 - 164. Pathak, V.S., Ancient Historians of India, pp.17,26.
 - 165. Gyani, S.D., Agni Purana - A Study, pp.27-28.
 - 166. Studies in the Upapurāṇas, Vol.I, p.26, Foot-note.66.
 - 167. Studies in the Upapurāṇas, Vol.I, p.26.
 - 168. Studies in Skanda Purāṇa, Pt.I, pp.183-196.
 - 169. Cf. Harha Inscription.
 - 169. Viṣṇudharmottaram, I, Ch.74.

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another such ruler who destroyed the Mlecchas as well as evils of the Kali Age. Thus, the interest in dynasties of the Kali Age ceased after the rule of the Guptas (Guptavāṁśajāḥ); but a new trend to portray the post-Gupta age developed. "The theory of Kail Age extended considerable influence on the development of medieval culture. Picture of the Kali Age portrayed in terrifying colours are given in several Purāṇas. Obviously they contain several strata belonging to different periods."¹⁷⁰ But no attempt has been made to study and interpret these strata.

The institution of sūtas was responsible for the development of this new trend in the Purāṇic literature. Sūta, well-versed in the Purāṇa-vidyā, was to be appointed as a minister in the royal Cabinet of eight members. He was to be consulted by king on all important matters relating to State.¹⁷¹ These Purāṇic sūtas were the court-historians. Even the inscriptions refer to Kali Age with all its horrors and Maukhārī rulers - Harivarman, Ādityavarman, Śīvaravarman and Iṣānavarman arrested the growth of Kali.¹⁷² Prabhākara vardhana set in motion his cakra aimed at the re-organisation of Varṇāśrama-vyavasthā.¹⁷³

But in the subsequent age, the valiant Tājikas (Arabs) with all their fire and fury, conquered Saṁdhava, Kacchella, Saurāṣṭra, Maurya, Gurjara and other places.¹⁷⁴ It marked the dawn of 'Prabala-Kalikāla.'¹⁷⁵ - the fierce age of Kali-which represented a dark-age of distress.¹⁷⁶ - aptly styled the dark night.¹⁷⁷ The atrocities caused by Mlecchas created an age of horror and hence the advent of Hari or a saviour became an urge of the epoch.

Dvārakā khaṇḍa Mahatmya (Skanda P., VII.iv) also exhibits its acquaintance with the Raudrakali,¹⁷⁸ or Ghora-kali,¹⁷⁹ i.e. the terrific age of Kali and its advance (kali-saṅkrama).¹⁸⁰ It had threatened the region around Dvārakā - the exalted abode of Kṛṣṇa. All the famous tīrthas except Dvārakā were seized by Kali.¹⁸¹ Most of these sacred places were defiled by Mleccha (Kali). Ānarta (north Kathiawar, with Dvārakā as its capital)

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170. Pathak, V.S., *Ancient Historians of India*, p.107.
 171. Mbh., Sāntiparva, LXXXV.9.
 172. H.L.I., p.113, Harha Ins. of Iṣānavarman, Verse 15.
 173. Ibid., p.145, Banskhera Copper Plate Ins. of Harṣa, 1.3.
 174. C.I.I., Vol.IV, pp.139,140.
 175. Ibid., pp.85/3, 92/2.
 176. Ibid., pp.60/6, 25, 68/6.
 177. Ibid., pp.294, verse 17 (text), and translation; 298, verse 17; 304, verse 17.
 178. Sk., VII.vi.1.1,2,16,35,36,49.
 179. Ibid., VII.iv.14.1.
 180. Ibid., iv.17.44.
 181. Sk., VII.iv.24.87.

was also filled with the Mlechas (bahu mleccha samākīrṇam) and hence the sacred country was turned into *Daitya-bhūmi*, where people devoid of Vedas and smārtas-dharma, lived.¹⁸² The demoniac people (daityas) persecuted people and they did not spare Brahmanas and other sages, who could not perform religious rites at the sacred confluence of the river Gomati with the ocean.¹⁸³ A Brāhmaṇa, in such state of dire distress, turned his mind towards Kṛṣṇa as his saviour for their protection against the onslaughts of such demoniac people.¹⁸⁴ He went to the refuge of Viṣṇu residing in Pātāla.¹⁸⁵ It reflects upon the migration of the people from Gujarat-Kathiawar to Dvīpāntara, which is used as a synonym for Pātāla.¹⁸⁶ Viṣṇu consoled him by His observations. "In my presence as Dharmapāla, none could persecute Brāhmaṇas".¹⁸⁷

There seems to be a covert reference to Dharmapāla, the great Pāla ruler, who was recognised as the overlord by the kings of Bhoja, Matsya, Yadu, Avanti, Madra, Kuru, Yavana, Gāndhāra and Kīra.¹⁸⁸ It was natural that Yadus living near Dvārakā sought the protection of Dharmapāla. The Skanda Purāṇa, also exhibits its knowledge of Vikramasīla,¹⁸⁹ who is also identified with Dharmapāla.¹⁹⁰

Sodhala, Gujrati poet of 11th Century A.D., also refers to him as *Uttarāpatha-svāmī*. His empire extended from Punjab in the west to Bengal in the east It touched the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea.¹⁹¹ It was, thus, in the fitness of things that Dharmapāla stood as the champion of the Yādavas and Bhojas of Gujarata against the Mlechas (Daityas). Gujarata needed a saviour like the other region 'against the insults of the sons of Danu'. There appeared, consequently, great heroes who offered stubborn resistance to demoniac people in the early medieval India. There is some truth in the bardic tales according to which Daityas began to render impure the holy spots of sanctity. The gleanings from the Skanda Purāṇa also support it. The contemporary inscriptions also refer to daityas.¹⁹² and asuras.¹⁹³

182. Ibid., VII.iv.18.18-19.

183. Ibid., VII.iv.22.29.

184. Ibid., VII.iv.18.31-33.,

185. Ibid., VII.iv.18.34-39.

186. Ibid., VII.iv.18.13,34 Here Patala is used as a synonym for Dvīpāntara. In the Garuda Purāṇa Simhala (Ceylon) is placed in the Pātālalokāntara sinhaleśu).

187. Ibid., VII.iv.18.45.

188. Khalimpur plate of Dharma Pāla Deva, Dr. B.P. Sinha, The Decline of Magadha, p.34

189. Sk., VII.ii.17.154-155.

190. The Decline of Magadha, p.383.

191. Ibid., p.343.

192. Aphsad Stone Inscription of Ādityasena, 1.8.

193. Gwalior Stone Inscription of Mihira Bhoja, 1.15. Enemies are compared with the Daityas and Asuras.

The pressure of Raudra-kali was heavily felt by the people of Dvārakā where Pākhanḍas rose to prominence. Lord Janārdana was born in the house of Vāsudeva to relieve the earth of the tyrannies.¹⁹⁴ The Skanda Purāṇa summarises the achievements of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.¹⁹⁵ At the end of the Bhārata War Kṛṣṇa led the Yādavas to Prabhāsa on the pretext of pilgrimage. Yādavas devoted to wine and war met their doom due to their mutual hostilities. Lord Kṛṣṇa also disappeared from the earth.

His departure from the world was followed by Arjunas coming to Dvārakā which was submerged in the waters of the sea. Arjuna set up a shrine dedicated to Hari and then he returned to Indraprastha. This marked the end of Dvapāra characterised by the mixture of dharma and adharma and the dawn of Kali - an age of terror and turmoil.¹⁹⁶

With the advent of Kali Age, *saddharma* (true religion) declined; *Vidharma* grew; vedic rites fell in abeyance and dharma was crippled standing on one leg devoid of the varṇāśrama system. It stirred the minds of sages and samnyāsins living in the forests. They held a samāja (a meeting) to deliberate upon the nature of the forces which threatened state, society, and culture. Garga, Cyavana, Bhārgava, Asita, Devala, Dhaumya, Kratu, Uddālaka and many such other thinkers discussed together. They exclaimed : 'Sages, see that Kali has seized the country on all sides and harrying bandits are appressing the people who are devoted to irreligious practices devoid of truth. How can they have Viṣṇu again to give them protection against the horrors of Kali? There is no other saviour except Madhusūdana'.¹⁹⁷ Ṛṣi Uddālaka said to the afflicted sages engaged in deliberations : "Let us go united to Brahmā who can tell us the whereabouts of Viṣṇu". So they all went to Brahma.¹⁹⁸ This Paurāṇic episode, viewed in its historical perspective, reflects upon the national consciousness spurred by the political condition of Gujarat in the age under review.

LIST OF TĪRTHAS OF DVĀRAKĀ KṢETRA

KUŚASTHALĪ (DVĀRĀVATĪ-DVĀRAKĀ)

Aho bata svar-yaśas tiraskarī

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194. Sk., VII.iv.1.1-4. (Cf. Bhāgavata p., X, Chaps.1-3).
 195. Ibid., VII.iv.1.5-10. (Cf. Bhāgavata P.X, Chaps.6.74).
 196. Sk., VII.iv.1.11-16.
 197. Ibid., VII.iv.1.17-22.
 198. Ibid., VII.iv.1.23-30.

Kuśasthalī punyayaśaskari bhuvah
paśyanti nityam yadanugraheśitam
smitāvalokam svapatim sma yat prajah.¹⁹⁹

Kuśasthalī or the sacred city of Dwārakā was the capital of Ānarta.²⁰⁰ (Ānartāpuri). It was headquarter of the confederacy of tribes viz., Madhu, Bhoja, Daśarha, Kukura, Andhaka and Viṣṇi.²⁰¹- popularly known as Andhaka-viṣṇi-samgha.²⁰² It was a prosperous city well-protected by the army.²⁰³ It was a beautiful city full of parks and gardens as well as markets, roads, gateways and dwelling-houses and palaces. Here lived Lord Kṛṣṇa - Vāsudeva along with his sons and grandsons etc.²⁰⁴ It was also known as Dvāravatī.²⁰⁵ It was an important tīrtha as well as a sacred kṣetra.²⁰⁶ and the Dwārakā Māhātmya of the Skanda Purāṇa (VII.iv) justifies its kṣetra-mukhyatā. It was sanctified by Kṛṣṇa and His devotees (bhāgavatas) like Nārada,²⁰⁷ Vidura²⁰⁸ and Arjuna²⁰⁹ etc.

Gomatyudadhi-saṅgama.²¹⁰ i.e. Gomati-sāgara-saṅgama was an important holy centre famous for the performance of religious rites, namely snāna (bath) and charity-kanyādāna and vidyādāna etc. It was, thus, an intellectual and spiritual centre adorned with temples.

Kṛṣṇa-puja.²¹¹ was very popular. Temples dedicated to Kṛṣṇa, Rukmiṇī and other deities namely Yogini-pīṭha of Sixtyfour yoginis, Sapta-matrkas, and aṣṭamūrtih (eight wives of Kṛṣṇa) namely Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Jāmbavatī, Mitravindā, Kālīndī, Bhadrā, Nāgnajitī and Lakṣmaṇā.²¹² The most celebrated shrine was dedicated to keśava, and Śiva (Maheśvara).²¹³

Dvāravatī (VII.iv.3.4) This sacred region of the sea-coast was Dvāravatī, where the river Gomati joins the Arabian sea.²¹⁴

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| 199. | Bhāg.I.10.27. |
| 200. | Ibid., I.10.35(ii), I.ii.1. |
| 201. | Ibid., I.14.25 |
| 202. | Ibid., I.ii.11(i), I.14.25(ii). |
| 203. | Ibid., I.ii.11(ii). |
| 204. | Ibid., I.ii.12-30. |
| 205. | Ibid., I.12.36(ii). |
| 206. | Ibid., I.13.9. |
| 207. | Ibid., I.13.37.59. |
| 208. | Ibid., I, Chap.13. |
| 209. | Ibid., I.14.1. |
| 210. | Sk., VII.iv.8.19. |
| 211. | Ibid., VII.iv.15.6. |
| 212. | Ibid., VII.iv.22.31-34. |
| 213. | Ibid., VII.iv.23.120. |
| 214. | Ibid., VII.iv.2.4. |

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Cakra-tīrtha (VII.iv.2.15). It was placed on the Gomati.

Dvārakā kṣetra (VII.iv.29.43). Thus Dvārakā-kṣetra situated on the western sea, where the Gomati joins it, was highly celebrated Vaiṣṇava kṣetra.²¹⁵

It was one of the seven Mokṣapurīs, like Ayodhyā, Mathurā, Māyā, Kāśī, Kāñcī and Avantikā.²¹⁶

215. Ibid., VII.iv.29.43.

216. Ibid., VII.i.29.5.

5

TĪRTHAS AND TEMPLES

In the Jambūdvipa Bhāratavarṣa called Karmabhūmi is called Tīrtha.¹ The entire country from the Himālaya to the Southern Sea-islands (Dvīpāntara, cf. Kaṭāha tīrtha modern Keda in Malaya) was adorned with Tīrthas - sacred hills, rivers, forests, ponds and lakes etc. where in solitary places, far from madding crowd, people and princes, gods and demons performed penances. Their life of sanctity and austerity lent divinity to those places which assumed the status of tīrtha.

Tīrtha means Tāraka in this *Bhava-sāgara*. Sages recited sacred texts, which created bhakti, Vairāgya (detachment) and jñāna. Temples dedicated to different deities were built. People performed pūjā and japa as well as Dāna etc. These tīrthas became religious centres, where Āśramas (hermitages) of saints and sages were centres of education and learning. But the Muslim invasions had destroyed most of the temples. Their names have been preserved in the Purāṇas. The Skanda and other Purāṇas give us the lists of such temples dedicated to Viṣṇu, Śiva, Brahmā, Sūrya and Devī under different names.

VAIŚNAVA-KṢETRAS (VIṢNU-STHĀNĀNI)

Garuḍa asked Nārada :

क देवः पुण्डरीकाक्षः सांप्रतं वर्तते मुने ।
 विष्णुस्थानानि सर्वाणि वीक्षितानि समंततः ।²
 आवाभ्यां संप्रहृष्टाभ्यां न सं दृष्टः स केशवः ॥

1. Braham P., 70.21.

2. Sk., VI.80.29.

Vaiṣṇava Purāna (Viṣṇu Purāṇa) marks the beginning of Vaiṣṇava-movement against heretics - Māyāmoha and his associates i.e. Buddhists and Jains - called *Nagnas*; because they had discarded the Vedas, which were, so far regarded as coverings. The Padma Purāṇa, specifically, wants to initiate the discussion as to how Buddhism had been suppressed by the Vaisnavas:

मायामोह निरासश्च वैष्णवैः क्रियते कथम् ?¹

Māyamoha denotes Buddha, the son of Śuddhodana. Thus the Vaiṣṇava-movement began as soon as Bṛhadratha was removed by Senānī Puṣyamitra.

Vidiśā, which was the home of Buddhist propoganda, became now a centre of Brahmanical revival under the patronage of Agnimitra. Under the Sātavāhanas, also, Vaiṣṇavism remained on the path of ascendancy.

Garuḍa and Garuḍadhvaja symbolised the glory of Vāsudeva. The last Kuṣāṇa emperor assumed the name of Vāsudeva, I and Mathurā became an other centre of the Vaiṣṇavas. Gupta (Hari), who appeared in the sacred city of Ayodhyā (Sāketa) laid the foundation of a Vaiṣṇava-ruling dynasty known as Gupta-Varmśa (Ayodhyā Māhātmya of the SK.P.). Gupta-Varmśajas established their empire over the entire earth surrounded by the four seas with Sumeru and Kailāsa, as vrhat-payodharas of vasundharā by the grace of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa (V.Dh.I.57.28).

GARUḌA AND THE GARUḌA-NĀGA MOTIF

The Vaiṣṇava dynasty of the Guptas chose the Garuḍa as its royal insignia. The great conqueror Samudragupta annihilated the Nāgas and the Nāgāntaka Garuḍa represents the philosophy of freedom.⁴

Nāgas seem to have raised their revolting heads, once again, during the reign of Skanda, who crushed them.⁵

- 3. Padma P. VI. 189. 7 (ii)
Bhāgavata M. 1.5
- 4. Sk., VI.80.27-29. VII, 80. 8-10; Garuda P.I. 2, 48-49
- 5. Junagarh Ins. of Skandgupta, vese 2.

On the copper plate grants of the Paramāras, we notice Garuda with Nāga in its grip, holding the Nāga in the mouth.⁶ Historians - Ganguli, H.C. Ray and P. Bhatia - of Paramāra dynasty took no special notice.

The fall of Prthvīrāja III in the battle of Terain (1192 A.D.) marks the beginning of the *rajanī-parābhavam* (dark night of distress) caused by the Devil. Lumpādhipa conquered the country ; and it marks the beginning of Turkish rule in India: *Daityākrāntam idam rāstram* (Sk., II.vii.23.25). The term Daitya denotes Muslim. Muslim rulers of Delhi Sultanate and the Moghals are called Daityas (cf. Bhavisya Purāṇa).

They are also called Nāgas. Garuda alone was the saviour against the *Nāgabhaya*. Garuḍa also represents Viṣṇu.

While describing the life of the Garuḍa, the Skanda Purāṇa, tells us that the Garuḍa had visited all the holy places dear to Viṣṇu (Viṣṇu-sthānāni sarvāṇi) - the Viṣṇu-ksetras – where the Lord resides like Śveta-dvīpa, Badarī, Kṣiroda (kṣirasāgara) and Vaikuṇṭha etc. and other places where He resides (tasya saṁsrayaṁ).

After the collapse of Prthvīrāja III Puṣkara was highly persecuted, despoiled and devastated by Mātaṅgas (Garjanaka Gajah). The reaction, revolt and rejuvenation of national forces began from the Vaiṣṇava kṣetra of Puṣkara.

The Viṣṇu Purāṇa begins with the Prayer “

जितं ते पुण्डरीकाक्ष¹
स नोऽस्तु विष्णुमतिभूतिमुक्तिदः॥²

Wilson and Hazra (who wrote Introduction to Wilson's Viṣṇu P.).⁹ knew nothing about its importance - Wilson translates :

“Victory be to thee, Pundarīkākṣa..... be to us bestower of understanding, wealth and emancipation.”.¹⁰

6. Viṣṇu P. (Nāga Edn., Wilson), II.1.1.

7. Viṣṇu P. (Nāga Edn., Wilson), I.1.1.

8. Ibid., I.1.2.

9. Punthi Pustak, Calcutta, 1961.

10. Ibid, pp 1-2. VP. I.i.1-2.

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These are the dictionary-meanings of *mati*, *bhūti* and *mukti*, which were used by Paurāṇika in the sense of devotion to Dharma (deśadharma) etc.

- (i) *dharme matih*
- (ii) *Śrī (Rājyaśrī)-aiśvarya*; and
- (iii) Mukti-liberation or freedom from the Daitya-rule.¹¹

Now the main aim was to destroy daitya-rājya and re-establish Devarājya.

*Bhuti denotes Śrī.*¹²

Puṣkara - kṣetra.¹³

Puṣkara was in the grip of Raudra Kali.¹⁴ (Mleccha) and Puṇya Bhārata was converted into Pākhaṇḍam Bhāratam. A sacrificial conference (samāja) - Satrayāga of Munis, saints and sages was held at Puṣkara:

स कदाचित्सत्रयांगं मुनीनां तु महात्मनाम् ।
अगमत्पुष्करे क्षेत्रे कुर्वतां मौनधारिणाम् ॥⁴

15

There, they must have discussed :

कथं मेल्छ समाकीर्णं देशोऽयं द्विज सत्तमं ।
रतदाचक्षव मां ब्रह्मन् मकिण्डेय महामते ॥

Sk. IV. III. 5.14

How this scared land has been occupied
by the Mleechas? 'O' sage, let me know,
Many changes in politics and religion were suggested.¹⁶

Thus, Puṣkarāraṇya became the main (first) centre of Vaiṣṇava movement. Viṣṇudharmottara (glorification of Viṣṇu and Viṣṇu-dharma) as well as polity, was added to the Viṣṇu Purāṇa as its supplement.

11. Viṣṇu P., I.9.113-115.

12. Ibid., I.9.117(ii).

13. Sk., II.vii.22.18(ii).

14. Ibid., II.vii.22.17-22.

15. Ibid., II.vii.22.8.

16. Awasthi, ABL, Indian Nationalism, Vol.I, Rajput Polity.

Pundarīkāksa is the *adhidevatā* (tīrtha-deva) of Puṣkara and he is invoked in the mangala - śloka of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa.

The Viṣṇudharmottara and the Agni Purāṇa mention a list of fifty-five Viṣṇukṣetras.¹⁷ The Skanda Purāṇa in its Vāsudeva Māhātmya (II.ix) tells us that our country, where resides the Lord Viṣṇu (Kūrma-mūrti) is the most sacred land upon the earth, where Munis, ascetics and saints perform austerities :

देशः सर्वोत्तमस्त्वेष भूवि यो मदधिष्ठितः ।
महामुनिगणा यत्र तपस्यन्ति महाव्रताः ॥²

18

It is due to the association of Hari and his devotees that places become sacred :

हरि तद्वक्तमाहात्म्याद्देशानामस्ति पुण्यता ।³

19

Pious persons should resort to such punyadeśas. These are :-

- 1) Gaṅgādvāra
- 2) Madhupuri (Mathurā)
- 3) Naimiṣāraṇya
- 4) Kurukṣetra
- 5) Ayodhyā
- 6) Gayā
- 7) Gaya
- 8) Vārāṇasi Puri
- 9) Pulahāśrama (North Bihar & Nepalese Terai-Salgrama kṣetra)
- 10) Kapilāśrama
- 11) Śrīraṅga
- 12) Prabhāsa
- 13) Kuśasthalī (Dvārakā)
- 14) Siddhapada kṣetra (near Kedāra, on the Mandākini, Garhwal U.P.)
- 15) Pauṣkara-Pond

17. Sk., II.ix.22.19.

18. Ibid., II.ix.22.20(i).

19. Ibid., II.ix.22.17-18(i).

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- 16) Raivatācala (place of Bhagvata-krīḍā in the company of Śrī).
- 17) Govardhana-giri
- 18) Vṛndāvana
- 19) Seven Kulaparvataḥ, Mahendra-Malayādyah
Mahendra (Eastern Ghāṭ)
Malaya (Southern part of Western Ghāṭ) (cf. St. Sk. P.I.
pp. 134-136)
- 20) Bhāgirathī (Gaṅgā in the Himālaya near Badrī-Kedāra).
- 21) Yamunā
- 22) Sarasvatī
- 23) Godāvarī (cf. Brahma Purāṇa, which glorifies it in 105 Chapters)
- 24) Sarayū
- 25) Kāverī
- 26) Gomati.²⁰

In all such sacred places people (of all classes) should perform *mahotsava* and worship the Bhagavat-pratimā.²¹ Exclusive devotees of the Lord must stay there. The places associated with the birth of Bhagavān and his abodes are Puṇya-deśas.²²

The wealthy and prosperous people were exhorted to build very strong temples dedicated to Viṣṇu providing its money or lands for its expenditure:

आद्यस्तु कारयेद्विष्णोर्मन्दिराणि हृदानि च ।²³
पूजाप्रवाहसिद्धर्घम् तद् वृत्तीश्चापि कारयेत् ॥

23

It explains for the construction of stone-temples and even rock-cut temples like those of Khajuraho, Alampur and Ellora etc. The Aihole-temples, its artists, took the challenges of idol-breakers.

20. Sk., II.ix.22.20(ii)-25(i). महोत्सवैर्भवेद्यत्रभगवत्प्रतिमार्चनम् ।

21. Ibid., II.ix.22.26 : प्रभोरनन्यभक्तांश्च भवेयुर्यत्र यत्र च ॥

It points to the history of fairs and festivals at such sacred places, where also messages and saints whose discourses to the people created a spirit of national consciousness and patriotism (cf. Indian Nationalism Vol.I.). It also points to the importance of tīrthas and temples, which was not realised by Dr. Tarachand who dealt with (Influence of Islam on Indian Culture).

22. Sk., II.ix.28(ii)-33.

23. Ibid., II.ix.22.38.

One thing must be noted here that the Kula-Parvatas of Mahendra (Orissa and Andhra), Malaya (Pāñdaya-deśa, Madura, Tanjore and Tinnevelly), Sahya (Ellora), Venkatadri, Rkṣa-vindhya and Pāriyātra-Abu were covered with dense forests in the river-valleys, where Muslim armies could not penetrate. These forests are called rāksāranya - the asylums of Hindu culture and civilisation.

The Aihole-group comprises more than seventy temples. Thus Aihole was a town of temples so was the case with that of Alampur and Khajuraho. These temples were well-maintained by the land-grants etc.

Fifty-five Viṣṇu-kṣetras

The Viṣṇudharmottara and the Agni Purāṇa have prepared a specific list of fifty-five Vaiṣṇava-kṣetras which were temple-towns in the past. The names of places and the deities placed in the temples were objects of devotion:

जपन् वै पञ्चपञ्चाशद् विष्णुनामानि यो नरः।
मन्त्रजप्यादि फलभाक्तीर्थेष्वचर्चादि चाक्षयम् ॥

24

Arcā set up in the tīrthāyatana (temples built at these holy centres) was akṣaya:

1)	Puṣkara	It was the main centre of Vaiṣṇava saints.
2)	Gayā	Gayā kṣetra of Bihar.
3)	Citrakūṭa	Citrakuta-vana (of Banda Dist. U.P.)
4)	Prabhāsa	Prabhāsa kṣetra of Raivata hill and forest on the western sea-coast.

24. Agni P.305.1.

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5)	Jayantī	Vaijayantī (Vanavasī) on the western sea-coast.
6)	Hastināpura	Hastinapur (Dist. Meerut, U.P.) was situated in Kuru-Jāngala.
7)	Vardhamāna	
8)	Kāśmīra	
9)	Kubjāmra	
10)	Mathurā	
11)	Kubjāmraka (Hṛishikesh, U.P.)	repeated Cf.No.9
12)	Gaṅgādvāra	Haridvar (U.P.)
13)	Śālagrāma	North Bihar and Nepalese Terai.
14)	Govardhanācala	Govardhan near Mathura (U.P.)
15)	Piṇḍāraka	Pindaraka tirtha, near Dwarka (Gujrat).
16)	Śāṅkhadvāra	Śāṅkhoddhāra in Gujrat. "The island of Basti (Beyt) in the gulf of Cutch". (G.D., p.177).
17)	Kurukṣetra	Kurukṣetra.
18)	Yamunā tata	Kalpi (U.P.)
19)	Śoṇa (River Śon)	
20)	Pūrva Sāgara	The Island of Sāgara near the mouth of the Gaṅges.
21)	Mahodadhi	Gaṅgāsāgara.
22)	Kiṣkindhyā	Anagandi. It is situated on the Tungabhadrā near Anagandi 3 miles from Vijayanagar (G.D., p.100-101).

23)	Raivataka	Raivataka hill Saurastra.
24)	Kāśī-taṭa	
25)	Viraja	Viraja (Jajpur in Orissa)
26)	Ajita	Viśakhāpattan (Vigagapattam)
27)	Lokabhavana	
28)	Kṛṣṇa	Dwārkā (Kathiawar)
29)	Madhūsudana	Mandar hill in the Banka sub-division, Bihar

"A hill situated in the..... Dist. of Bhagalpur, two or three miles to the north of Bamsi (Vamsī) and 30 miles to the south of Bhagalpur. On a lower bluff on the western side of the peak was the original temple of Madhusūdana." (G.D., p.124).

30) Lakakula Lokākule seems to be a mistake for 'Kokākūle ripuharam. Kokā is an ancient river associated with the sacred region named Kokāmukha-varāha (Garuda I.81.14) and Brahma Purāṇa). It was a celebrated Vaiṣṇava kṣetra of great sanctity.

Bakhtyar Khilji who destroyed the temples and Buddhist monasteries of Bihar met his doom on this river. Hence, the deity is aptly called Ripuhara.

31) Śālagrāma Repeated Cf.No.13.

This sacred place is situated on the bank of the Gandakī. The place is called Haripur in the Champaran District of North Bihar. Many exalted personalities viz., R̄ṣabha, Bharata, Pulaha and Pulastya etc. performed penances here.

32)	Puruṣa-vata	Puruṣavaṭa seems to denote Puruṣapura (Peshawar)
33)	Vimala	Jāgatprabhu (Jāgannātha)
34)	Saindhāvaraṇya	Ananta, sacred forest in the Sindhu valley (cf. Anantanāge of Kāśmīra).

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124		Sāraṅgadhara (bow-holding deity)
35)	Danḍaka	(Viṣṇu) may be Rāma- Dāśarathi
36)	Utpalāvartaka	Utpalavartaka or Utpalāraṇya denotes the Bihtoor - Brahmavarta (near Kanpur, U.P.)
37)	Narmadā	Śripati.
38)	Raivataka	repeated Cf.No.23.
39)	Nandā	Jalaśāyi.
40)	Sindhvabdhī	Gopisvara (Sindhusāgara)

It may have been the Viṣṇu temple of Abiria or Abhira coast of Sindhusāgara.

41)	Mahendra	Mahendra-Eastern Ghat.
42)	Sahyādri	Sahyadri is western Ghat.

Nāsikya (Nasik) and Govardhana seem to be the Vaiṣṇava tīrthas of Sahyādri and Devadeveśa seems to refer to Dāśarathi Rāma who lived here during the period of his exile.

43)	Magadha-vana Magadhāraṇya.	Vaikuṇṭha
44)	Vindhya	
45)	Audra (Odras)	Orissa - Puruṣottama kṣetra of Orrisa

Lists of Vaiṣṇava-kṣetras mentioned in the Agni Purāṇa as well as in the Viṣṇudharmottara are not complete amounting to fifty-five.

The Viṣṇudharmottara gives a few names which are not found in the Agni Purāṇa. These are :

- 1) लोहदण्डे विष्णुं ... V.Dh.III.125. 8(ii) (No.3)
- 2) वृन्दावने गोविन्दं 9(ii) (No.6)

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3) श्रीकृष्णे श्रीधरं	11(ii) (No.13)	
4) देविकातीरे भूधरं ...	14(ii) (No.24)	
5) प्रयागे योगशायिनम्	14(i) (No.25)	
6) बदरिकाश्रमे नरनारायणौ	15(i) (No.26)	
7) दक्षिणेसमुद्रे पद्मनाभः	15(ii) (No.27)	
8) अश्वतीर्थे हयग्रीवं	17(i) (No.31)	
9) हिमाचले विश्वरूपं	17(i) (No.32)	
10) कृतशौचे नृसिंहं	17(ii) (No.33)	
11) विपाशायां द्विजप्रियं	17(ii) (No.34)	
12) नैमिषे यज्ञपुरुषं	18(i) (No.35)	
13) जम्बुमाले अच्युतं	18(i) (No.36)	

Among the 45 places of the Agni Purāṇa 9 and 11 (Kubjāmra), 13 and 31 (Śālagrama) and 23-38 (Raivataka) are repeated. Thus the Agni Purāṇa gives only 42 names. If we add 13 names, noted above, from the Viṣṇu dharmottara, we get the complete list of 55 Vaisṇava kṣetras.

Etāny eva hi sthānāni devadevasya cakriṇāḥ

LIST OF 68 TĪRTHAS (VI.108.21) - ŚIVA-KṢETRAS

Vārāṇasi, Prayāga, Naimiṣa, Gayāśira, Kurujāṅgala, Prabhāse, Puṣkara, Viśveśvara, Aṭṭahasa, Mahendra, Ujjayinī, Marukoṭi, Śaṅkukarṇa, Gokarna Kṣetra, Rudrakoṭi, Sthaleśa, Harṣita, Vṛṣabhadhyaja, Kedāra, Madhyamakeśvara, Sahasrākṣa, Kārtikeśvara, Vastramārga (Vastrāpatha), Kanakhala, Bhadrakarṇa; Daṇḍaka (Devadāru vana), Tridaṇḍa, Kṛmijāṅgala, Ekāmra, Chāgālaka, Kāliñjara, Maṇḍaleśvara (Daṇḍakaranya) Kṣetra, Kāśmīra, Marukeśa, Hariścandra, Puraścandra, Vāmeśa, Kukkuṭeśvara, Bhasmagātra, Orikāra, Trisandhyā, Virajā, Arkeśvara, Nepāla, Duṣkarṇa, Karavīraka, Jāgeśvara, Śrīśaila, Ayodhyā, Pāṭāla, Kārohaṇa (Kāyāvarohaṇa) Devikā, Bhairava, Pūrvasāgara, Sapta Godāvāri-tīrtha, Nirmaleśa, Kārnikāra, Kailāsa, Jāhnavītīre (Gaṅgādvāra), Jalalīṅga, Vāḍava (Paṇḍava), Badari tīrtha, Koṭitīrtha, Vindhyaśala, Hemakūṭa, Gandhamādana, Liṅgeśvara Kṣetra, Laṅkādvāra, Naleśvara, Madhyeśa, Kedāra, Rudrajālaka, Suvarṇākhya (Suvarṇa) and Śaṣṭikāpatha.²⁵ Here we find actually the names of seventy-four tīrthas. The next chapter VI.109) gives us the names of Śiva (Śaiva-shrines) associated with them these are

25. Sk., VI, Chap. CVIII.

given below:

These tīrthas represent the essence of tīrhākhyāna. But Skanda further reduces the list to eight and this tīrthāṣṭaka represents the essence of sixty-eight tīrthas. These are: Naimiṣa, Kedāra, Puṣkara, Kṛmijāṅgala, Vārāṇasi, Kurukṣetra, Prabhāsa, and Hāṭakeśvara. Of these eight places Hāṭakeśvara is the most exalted kṣetra, where the rest of the tīrthas reside despite the catastrophic age of Kali (Kalikāla'pi). Hence Hāṭakeśvara is to be worshipped by all the persons desirous of mokṣa.²⁶

No.	Tīrtha	Namadeva
1.	Vārāṇasi	Mahādeva
2.	Prayāga	Maheśvara
3.	Naimiṣa	Devadeva
4.	Gayā	Prapitāmaha
5.	Kurukṣetra	Sthānu (Sthānivīśvara)
6.	Prabhāsa	Śaśīekhara
7.	Puṣkara	Ajagandhi
8.	Viśvesvara	Viśva
9.	Atṭahasa	Mahanāda
10.	Mahendra	Mahavrata
11.	Ujjayinī	Mahakāla
12.	Marukoṭa	Mahotkāṭa
13.	Śāṅkukarṇa	Mahāteja
14.	Gokarṇa	Mahābala
15.	Rudrakoṭi	Mahāyoga
16.	Sthaleśvara	Mahālinīga
17.	Harṣita	Harsa Harṣagiri near Sikar (Rajasthan)
18.	Vriṣabhadhvaja	Vrisabha
19.	Kedāra	Īśāna
20.	Madhyamakeśvara	Śarva
21.	Sahasrākṣa	Suparṇa
22.	Kārtikeśvara	Sūkṣm (Susūkṣm)
23.	Vastrāpatha	Bhava
24.	Kanakhala	Ugra
25.	Bhadrakarṇa	Śiva
26.	Dāṇḍaka	Dāṇḍin
27.	Tridaṇḍī	Ūrdhvareta

26. Sk., VI.110.1-10.

No.	Tīrtha	Namadeva
28.	Kṛmijāṅgala	Caṇḍisa
29.	Ekāmra	Kṛttivāsa
30.	Chāgala	Kapardin
31.	Kālinjara	Nīlakanṭha
32.	Māndaleśvara	Śrīkanṭha
33.	Kāsmīra	Vijaya
34.	Marukeśvara	Jayanta
35.	Hariścandra	Hara
36.	Purascandra	Śaṅkara
37.	Vameśvara	Jatī
38.	Kukkuṭeśvara	Sauṁya
39.	Bhasmagātra	Bhutesvara
40.	Oṅkāra	Amarakāntaka
41.	Trisandhyā	Tryambaka
42.	Viraja	Trilochana
43.	Arkeśvara	Dīptam
44.	Nepāla	Paśupālaka
45.	Duṣkarṇa	Yamaliṅga
46.	Karavīraka	Kapālī
47.	Jāgeśvara	Triśūlī
48.	Śrīśaila	Tripurāntaka
49.	Ayodhyā	Rohaṇa
50.	Pātāla	Hāṭakeśvara
51.	Kārohaṇa (Kayavarchana)	Nakulīśa
52.	Devikā	Umāpati
53.	Bhairava	Bhairavākara
54.	Pūrvasagara	Amara
55.	Sapta Godāvara	Bhīma
56.	Nirmaleśvara	Svayambhū
57.	Karṇikākāra	Ganādhyakṣa
58.	Kailāsa	Gaṇādhipa
59.	Gaṅgādvāra	Himasthāna
60.	Jalaliṅga	Jalapriya
61.	Vaḍavā	Anala
62.	Badarikaśrama	Bhīma
63.	Śreṣṭha	Koṭīśvara
64.	Vindhya-parvata	Varāha
65.	Hemakūṭa	Virūpākṣa
66.	Gandhamādana	Bhurbhuva
67.	Lingeśvara	Varada
68.	Laṅka	Narāntaka

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Holy Places Dear to Devī

ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT NAMES OF DEVI - PITHAS

No.	Devi	Place	Modern Identification
1.	Viśālāksī	Vārānasi	Varanasi (Banaras)
2.	Lingadhāriṇī	Naimiṣa	Nimsar, Dt. Stapur (U.P.)
3.	Lalitādevī	Prayāga	Prayaga (U.P.)
4.	Kāmukā	Gandhamādāna	Hill near Badrinath
5.	Kumudā	Mānasa	(Pauri-Garhwal) Manasarvar Region
6.	Viśvakāya	Apara (?)	X
7.	Gomati	Gomanta	Goa
8.	Kāmacāriṇī	Mandara	X
9.	Madoṭkaṭā	Caitraratha	
10.	Jayantī	Hastināpura	Hastinapur, Dt. Meerut (U.P.)
11.	Gaurī	Kānyakubja	Kanauj (U.P.)
12.	Rambhā	Amala-parvata	X
13.	Kīrtimati	Ekāmraka-vana	Bhuvaneshvara (Orissa)
14.	Viśvā	Viśveśvara	
15.	Puruḥūta	Puṣkara	Pushkar (Ajmer, Rajasthan)
16.	Mārgadāyini	Kedāra	Kedar (Pauri)
17.	Nandā	Himavata	
18.	Bhadrakanṇikā	Gokarṇa	
19.	Bhavāni	Sthāneśvara	Thaneshwar Dt. Karnal
20.	Bilvapatrikā	Bilvaka	
21.	Madhavi	Śrīsaila	Celebrated hill of South India
22.	Bhadreśvari	Bhadra	
23.	Jayā	Varāhaśaila	
24.	Kamalā	Kamalalaya	
25.	Kalyāṇi	Rudrakoṭi	
26.	Kali	Kālañjara	
27.	Kapilā	Mahāliṅga	Bundelkhand Dt. Band (U.P.)
28.	Mukuteśvari	Mākoṭa	

29.	Mahādevī	Śaligrāma	North Bihar & Nepalese Terai
30.	Jalapriyā	Śivalīṅga	
31.	Kumārī	Māyāpuri	
32.	Lalitā	Santāna	
33.	Utpalākṣī	Sahasrāksa	
34.	Mahotpalā	Hiraṇyākṣa	
35.	Vimalā	Gayā	Bihar
36.	Maṅgalā	Puruṣottama	Orissa
37.	Amoghākṣī	Vipāśā	R.Bees East Punjab
38.	Pāṭalā	Puṇḍravardhana	North Bengal
39.	Nārāyaṇī	Supārśva	
40.	Bhadrasundari	Trikūṭa	
41.	Vipulā	Vipula	
42.	Kalyāṇī	Malayācala	Pāṇḍya deśa
43.	Koṭavī	Koṭitīrtha	
44.	Sugandhā	Gandhamādana	
45.	Trisandhyā	Godāśrama	
46.	Ratipriyā	Gaṅgādvāra	Haridwar
47.	Subhānandā	Śivacanḍa	
48.	Nandini	Devikāṭaṭa	
49.	Rukmiṇī	Dvāravati	Dwarka
50.	Rādhā	Vṛindāvana	near Mathura, U.P
51.	Devakī	Mathurā	Mathura (U.P.)
52.	Parameśvarī	Pāṭāla	X
53.	Sītā	Citrakūṭa	Dist. Banda (U.P.)
54.	Vindhya-vāsinī	Vindhya	Vindhya-chal Dt. Mirgapur (U.P.)
55.	Ekavīrā	Sahyādri	Western Ghats
56.	Caṇḍikā	Hariścandra	
57.	Ramaṇā	Rāmatīrtha	
58.	Mṛgāvatī	Yamunā	Kauśambi
59.	Māhālakṣmī	Karavīra	
60.	Rūpādevī (Rūmādevi)	Vināpaka	Lumbini (Nepal)
61.	Ārogyā	Vaidyanātha	Bihar
62.	Maheśvarī	Mahākāla	Ujjayini
63.	Abhayā	Uṣṇatīrtha	
64.	Mrgī	Vindhya-kandara	
65.	Māṇḍukī	Māṇḍavya	
66.	Svāhā	Māheśvarapura	Mahesvara, M.P. (Manahata) on Narmada

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67.	Pracanḍā	Chāgalinga	
68.	Candikā	Amarakaṇṭaka	Famous hill of M.P.
69.	Varārohā	Someśvara	
70.	Puskarāvati	Prabhāsa	
71.	Vedemātā	Sarasvatī	
72.	Pārā	Pārātaṭa	Padmavati, Padmpawaya Gwalior
73.	Mahābhagā	Mahalaya	
74.	Piṅgaleśvari	Payoṣni	
75.	Sinhikā	Kṛtaśauca	
76.	Śaṅkarī	Kārttika	Kanti
77.	Laolā	Utpalāvartaka	
78.	Subhadrā	Sonjasamāgama	
79.	Lakṣmī	Siddhavaṭa	
80.	Taraṅgā	Bhāratāśrama	
81.	Viśvamukhī	Jālandhara	Gullundher (East Punjab)
82.	Tārā	Kiṣkindha-parvata	
83.	Puṣti	Devadāruvana	Himalaya
84.	Medhā	Kāśmīra	Kashmir maṇḍala
85.	Bhīmā	Himādri	
86.	Puṣti	Vastreśvara	
87.	Śuddhi	Kapālmocana	Kāśī
88.	Mātā	Kāyāvarohaṇa	Gujrat
89.	Dhvani	Śaṅkhoddhāra	
90.	Dhṛti	Piṇḍāraka	
91.	Kālā	Candrabhāgā	
92.	Śaktidhāriṇī	Acchoda	
93.	Amṛtā	Veṇā	
94.	Urvaśi	Badari	Badri nāth (Pauri)
95.	Oṣadhi	Uttara kuru	Central Asia
96.	Kuśodakā	Kuśadvīpa	
97.	Maṇmathā	Hemakūṭa	
98.	Satyavādini	Kumuda	Kailāsa
99.	Vandinīkā	Aśvattha	
100.	Nidhi	Vaiśravaṇālaya	
101.	Gāyatrī	Vedavadana	Abode of kuvera
102.	Pārvatī	near Śiva	
103.	Indrāṇi	Devaloka	
104.	Sarasvatī	Brahmāsyā	
105.	Prabhā	Suryavimba	
106.	Vaiṣnavī	With mothers	

107.	Arundhati	With pious women (Satis)
108.	Tillottamā	with women (ramasu)
109.	Brahmakalā	Citra (painting)
110.	Sakti	all creature
111.	Śūleśvarī	Bhṛgukseta
112.	Saubhāgya- sundarī	Bhṛgu. ²⁷ Broach

These are one-hundred and eight (actually III) names.²⁸ of Śūleśvarī who is associated here with Bhṛgukseta (Broach). It shows that the other - Goddess was worshipped in Western India. This list like the similar lists of the other deities reflects the prevalence of Sākti-worship in the different parts of India. The identification of all the places is not possible in the present state of our knowledge. The name of Puṣti is repeated (Cf. No.83 & 86). Similarly Gandhamādana (Cf. Nos. 4 & 44) also figures twice. We have two Gandhamādanas - one in the north near Badrinath and the other lay near the Southern Occean.

Dvārāvatī (No.49), Prabhāsa (No.70) and Kāyāvaroḥaṇa (No.28) etc. as the sacred spots sanctified by the Goddess reflect upon the prevalence of Sākti-worship in Western India. Puṣkara (No.15) in Rajasthan and Māhākala (No.62, probally at Ujjain) in Malwa, were also centres of Sakti-cult in this region, names of the Goddess Pārā placed on the bank of the river Pārā (Pārātāta, No.72) deserves notice pārā may be the same as the Pārvatī, which rises in Bhopal.²⁹ The celebrated town of Padmāvatī lay not far from it at the confluence of Pārā and Sindhu. Amarakanṭaka and Māheśvarapura (No.66,= Mahesvar in Indore District) were sacred places on the river Narmadā, Vārānasi, Naimiṣa, Prayāga, Hāstināpura, Kānyakubja, Kedāra, Kālañjara, Māyāpuri, Gaṅgādvāra, Vṛndāvana, Mathurā, Citrakūṭa and Badari are the famous places of the U.P. Sthāneśvara, Jālandhara, Vipāśā (the river Beas) and Devikātāta, were the centres of Sakti-worship in the Punjab, Kāśmīra too had the shrine of Medhā, Ekāmra and Puruṣottama in Orissa, Gayā and Vaidyanātha in Bihar and Pundravardhana in Bengal represent the prevalence of Devī-worship in Eastern India.³⁰ Gomanta, Srisaila, Malayacala, Godasrama, Sahyadri, Karavina, India.³¹ Gomanta, Srisaila, Malayacala, Godasrama, Sahyadri, Karavina,

27. Sk., V.iii.198.64-91.

28. Ibid., V.iii.198.57-58.

29. SCT PP.87-91. Dr.D.C. Sircar, Sakti Cult in Western India.

30. Cf. PTR, pp.129-130, for Devī-worship in Orissa. cf. SCT pp. 74-86 for "The evolution of Sākti Cult at Jaipur, Bhubeneswar and Puri" Ibid, pp.92-100 for sakti worship in Rajasthan.

Payosni and Vena, represent the worship of the goddess in Southern India.

Some epithets like Nidhi, Gayaitrī, and Brahmakātā respectively associated with Vaiśravaṇa (Kubera, the god of wealth), Veda and Citra and very interesting.

SUN WORSHIP

Introduction

"The Indian like most other ancient nations of the world worshipped the sun-god in a general way from a very early period....." Sūrya with some of his various aspects came to play a great part in the religious life of the Rgvedic people, and the solar divinities continued to claim deep respect from the Indian of the late Vedic age. The epic literature also contains many references to their worship some of the Purāṇas like Brahma, Skanda and the Bhaviṣya, glorify sun-worship.

SIXTY-EIGHT SHRINES OF SUN

Skanda refers to sixty-eight names of the Sun enumerated by Vasiṣṭha.³¹ They are associated with his shrines placed in the different parts of the country. These are :-

No.	Name of Āditya	Name of Tīrtha	Modern Identification
1.	(In the morning)	Mundīrasvāmī	Gangāsāgara.
2.	(In the noon) Kālapriya	Kālapriya on Yamunā	Kalpi
3.	(At sunset) Mūlasthāna	Mulasthana on Candrabhāgā	(U.P.) Multan (West Punjab)
Here Śāmba attained success by observing fasts			
4.	Lohitāksa	Vārāṇasī	
5.	Bṛhanmukha	Gobhilāksa	Vārāṇasī

31. Sk., VII.i.139.8.

6.	Pratiṣṭhāna	Prayāga	
7.	Vṛddhāditya	Mahādyuti (Vṛddhādityam̄ mahadhyutau). ³²	
8.	Dvādaśāditya	Koṭyakṣa of Kopajñā. ³³	
9.	Gaṅgāditya	Caturghata or Caturvaṭa. ³⁴	
10.	Goghna or Golastha. ³⁵	Naimiṣa (U.P.)	Nimsar Dt. Sitapur
11.	Bhadra	Bhadrapuṭa	
12.	Vijayāditya	Jayā	
13.	Svarṇavetasa	Prabhāsa	Prabhasa (Saurashba)
14.	Sāṁanta	Kuruksētra	Haryana
15.	Mitra (Trimantram) S.V.	Ilāvṛta	
16.	Kramaṇāditya	Mahendra	Eastern Ghat
17.	Siddhesvara	R̥ṇa	
18.	Padmabodha	Kauśāmbī	Kosam, Dt. Allahabad (U.P.)
19.	Divākara	Brahmavāha	Bahmanabad (Sind)
20.	Caṇḍakānti or Candrapratyusa. ³⁶	Kedāra	Kedar (Puri)
21.	Timirāpaha	Nitya	
22.	Śivadvāra	Gaṅgāmārga or Gaṅgāvara. ³⁷	Hardwar (Dt. Saharanpur U.P.)
23.	Āditya	Bhūpradīpana	
24.	Haṁsa	Sarasvatī-tīra	Sārasvata mandal- (Gujrat)
25.	Viśvāmitra	Pṛthūdaka	Pehoa (Distt. Karnal)
26.	Naradvīpa	Ujjayini	Ujjain
27.	Amaladyuti	Siddhā	
28.	Sūrya	Kuntikūmāra	Kuntwar (Gwalior) M.P.
29.	Vibhāvasu	Pañcanada	
30.	Vimalāditya	Mathurā	Mathura (U.P.)
31.	Sañjñāditya	Sanjñika or Sanjañaka. ³⁸	

32. N.K., Prabhasa, CXXXIII.14; S.V. Text is faulty.

33. Ibid., CXXXIII.14(i)

34. Ibid., CXXXIII.14(ii).

35. Ibid., CXXXIII.15(i).

36. N.K., Prabhasa, CXXXIII.16(i).

37. Ibid., CXXXIII.17(i).

38. Ibid., CXXXIII.19(i).

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32.	Mārtāṇḍa	Śrīkaṇṭha	Thaneswar, Haryana
33.	Dariśaka or Daṇḍaka. ³⁹	Daśārṇa	East Malawg
34.	Gopatideva	Godhana	Rajasthan
35.	Karṇa	Marusthala	
36.	Puṣpa	Devapura	
37.	Keśavārka	Lohita	Assam
38.	Sārdūla	Vaidīsa	Vidisha (M.P.)
39.	Vāruṇavasīn	Sona	Deo-Barnark, Bihar
40.	Sāmba	Vardhamāna	Assam
41.	Śubharmikara	Kāmarūpa	Kanauj (U.P.)
42.	Mihira	Kānyakubja	North Benga
43.	Mandāra	Puṇyavardhana (Pundravardhan)	
44.	Kṣobhanāditya	Gandhāra	Gandhara (Dt. Peshwar)
45.	Amaradyuti	Laṅkā	
46.	Karṇāditya	Campā	Champa, (Bihar)
47.	Śubhadarsī	Prabodha	
48.	Pārvatyā	Dvārāvati	Dwarka
49.	Himāpaha	Himavanta	Himalaya
50.	Mahāeja	Lauhitya	Assam
51.	Dhurjati	Amatāṅga	
52.	Kumāra	Rohika (Rohitaka)	Rohtak, Hariyana
53.	Padma-sambhava	Padmā	
54.	Dharmāditya	Lāṭā or	Gujrat
55.	Sthaiṣra	Marddaka (or Arbuda). ⁴⁰	Abu (Rajasthan)
56.	Sukhaprada	Kauberī	
57.	Gopati	Kosala	
58.	Padmadeva	Kauṅkaṇa	Ayodhya
59.	Tāpana	Vindhyanarvata	
60.	Tvaṣṭā	Kāśmīra	
61.	Ratnasambhava	Caritra	
62.	Hemagarbhastha	Puṣhkara	Pushkar (near, Ajmer Rajasthan)
63.	Sūrya	Gabhastika	Pushkar
64.	Mujjhāla	Prakāśā	
65.	Prabhākara	Tīrthagrāma	
66.	Rillakāditya	Kāmpillya	

39. Ibid., CXXXIII.19(ii).

40. NK. Prabhāsa Kh. CXXXIII.25(i).

67.	Dhanavāśīna	Dhanaka or Dhānyaka. ⁴¹	Dhanyakataka Andhra
68.	Anala	Narmada-tira. ⁴²	

The recitation of these sixty-eight names of Bhāskara Deva in the morning fulfils the desires of a devotee.⁴³ Many of the places associated with solar-shrines are not identified, but a few of them like Gaṅgāsāgara, Kālapriya, Mūlasthāna, Vārāṇasi, Pṛyāga, Naimiṣa, Prabhāsa, Pṛthūdaka, Kuruksetra, Mahendra, Kauśāmbī, Brahmavāha, Kedāra, Gaṅgāmārga, Ujjayinī, Mathurā, Śrīkaṇṭha, Daśārṇa, Marusthala, Vaidiṣa, Vardhamāna, Kāmarūpa, Kānyakubja, Gāndhāra, Laṅkā, Campā, Dvārāvati, Lauhitya, Lāṭā, Kosala, Kaurikaṇa, Vindhya, Kāśmīra, Puṣkara, Kāmpilya, and Narmadātīra are well-known places. Gabhastika-llāvṛta (placed around Meru) comprising the shrine of Mitra is important because the name mitra or mithra exhibits the foreign influence.⁴⁴

At Kālpriya or Kalpi (U.P.) the Sun is still worshipped under the name of Kālapadeva in the form of a symbol which is used for disc representing lotus. At Kalpi we have an image of the Sun. These facts support the importance of Kalpi or Kālpriya as an important centre of Sun-worship.

Deo-Baraṇark inscription of Jīvitagupta II is "an inscription of solar worship. Its object being to record the continuance of the grant of a village either Vārunika or Kisoravāṭaka to the sun under the title of Varuṇavāsin, a name which is of some interest, as apparently pressing accordance with which varuna literally 'that which envelopes' meant the all-encompassing sky, before it became the name of the ocean-god Varuṇa, who himself was originally looked upon as one of the twelve Ādityas, or forms of the sun, the offspring of Aditi.⁴⁵ Fleet adds Vārunika is plainly the modern Deo-Baraṇark itself. In the modern name, the first component is deva, 'a god', and the second, a corruption of Varuṇārka, evidently gives the name of a later conception of the original god, embodying the attributes of the Sun (ark) with those of Varuna."⁴⁶ The list of 68 shrines of the Sun mentioned above refers to Vārunavasin of Soṇa (No.39, Sone Vārunavāsinam).⁴⁷ who is to be

41. N.K. Prabhāsae, 133.27 (i)

42. Sk., VII.i.139.11-29(i).

43. Ibid., VII.i.139.29(ii)-32.

44. St., Up. Vol.I. pp.30-32, 40-41.

45. Deo. Varnark Ins. of Jīvitagupta II.; C. II Vol III pp 295f

46. Bhrama p. 89 2

47. VII. I. 139.21

identified with "Śrī Vāruṇavasin bhattaraka."⁴⁸ or Bhagavacchri Varuṇavasi bhattaraka.⁴⁹ of the above inscription associated with the ruler of Guptas of Magadha, which also refers to 'Varuṇavāsy āyatanam'. It shows that there was an 'āyatanam' or temple dedicated to the god Varuṇavasin, as is evident from the Skānda list of the sixtyeight shrines of the Sun. Hence Deo-Baranark, "a village about twentyfive miles south-west of Arah the chief town of the Shahabad District" in Bihar should be identified with Śoṇa. Shahabad District is watered by the river Śoṇa, a tributary of the Ganges, hence the name Śoṇa seems to have been given to the region watered by the river Śoṇa. Thus the list of these shrines set up in the different parts of the country is very important.

KSETRA-TRIKA

- 1) *Araṇyatrīka* (3 sacred forests), viz. Puskarāraṇya, Naimiṣarāṇya, Dharmāranya.⁵⁰
- 2) *Puri-trika* (3 sacred cities), viz., Vārāṇasi, Dwārākā, Avanti.⁵¹
- 3) *Vana-traya* viz., Vrndāvana, Khāṇḍavavana, Dvaitavana.⁵²
- 4) *Grāma-traya* (3 sacred villages) - Kalāpagrama, Śāligrama, Nan-digrāma.⁵³
- 5) *Trītha-traya* viz., Agnitīrtha, Śuklatīrtha, Pitṛtīrtha.⁵⁴
- 6) *Parvata-traya* viz., Śriparvata, Arbuda, Raivata.⁵⁵
- 7) *Mahānadi-traya* viz., Gaṅgā, Narmadā, Sarasvatī.⁵⁶

There is another reference to three-villages (trigrāma villages) and nine-forests (navāraṇya).⁵⁷ It shows that villages, cities, forests, and rivers, were also glorified as sacred spots, which destroy all the sins (tīrtham pāpavṛkṣa kūṭhārakam).⁵⁸

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48. C.I.I., Vol. III, pp. 295f
 49. Ibid., Sel - Ins. Vol. II, pp. 50-53
 50. Sk., VI.199.13.
 51. Ibid., VI.199.15.
 52. Ibid., VI.199.17.
 53. Ibid., VI.199.19.
 54. Ibid., VI.199.21.
 55. Ibid., VI.199.23.
 56. Ibid., VI.199.25.
 57. Ibid., V.i.63.96.
 58. Ibid., II.i.14.45

6

LIST OF TĪRTHAS

The tīrthas have their unique significance in the cultural and political history of India. The people performed pilgrimage to wash their sins; as, for example, Paraśurāma, the annihilator of the kṣatriyas, was asked by his father to desist from that sinful act and perform a pilgrimage.¹ Similarly, we find many other stories in the Skanda Purāṇa concerning purificatory pilgrimages performed by all classes of persons. Arjuna, too, went on a long pilgrimage lasting for twelve years.² Thus, Skanda also upholds the importance of pilgrimage i.e. visit to holy places (tīrthānām darśanām) and sacred bath therein (avagāhah), as well as the study of and listening to their merits (māhātmya śravaṇām).³

Pilgrimage to the holy tīrthas as well as the sacred bath and other religious rites performed there were believed to lead to the realisation of heavenly bliss.⁴ It is for this reason that the Epics, Purāṇas, and other holy texts eulogise the sacred spots. Skanda also contains hundreds of such tīrtha-māhātmayas, dealing with their merits (tīrthāsyā guṇān bahun).⁵

Thus, evidently, there had been, then as now, a large number of sacred spots in this country.⁶ Some are stated to be 'Kāmyāni' (fulfilling desires) while others are mentioned as 'Muktidāni' (bringing spiritual bliss), and all of them bring good here and hereafter.⁷ The number of tīrthas situated in this country was very large numbering three and a half crores.⁸ The sacred regions (kṣetras), rivers, mountains and rivulets are associated with the performance of asceticism by the Ṛsis.⁹

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1. Nila M.P., 1389-1391.
 2. Sk.P., I.ii.2.3.4.
 3. Ibid., I.ii.2.15-17.
 4. SK., I.ii.58.12.
 5. Ibid., I.ii.2.21.
 6. Ibid., II.iii.1.17; VII.ii.12.36-38.
 7. Ibid., II.iii.1.18.
 8. Ibid., VI.108.9; VII.iii.1.4.
 9. Ibid., VII.iii.1.5.

Tīrtha-Viplava

But during the age under review the Mlecchas had defiled these holy spots,¹⁰ thereby causing great terror. It scared the people to seek shelter. Arbuda, Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra and Vārāṇasī, along with others, were protected by gods headed by Indra. Thus, the advent of the Turuṣkas (Turks) caused Tīrtha-viplava, which occurred during the age of crisis and catastrophe (*Kalikāla raudre*).¹¹ This '*tīrtha-viplava*', mentioned above is graphically portrayed in the *Prthvirāja-vijaya* written about 1192 A.D. It asserts that violent armies of the Mleccha-Mātāṅgas (Muslim - Elephants') defiled the holy Puṣkara, and caused impurities where in the past sacred rites were performed.¹² Dr. V.S. Pathak is not concerned with these historical phenomena portrayed by Jayānaka - the great historian.¹³

The list of the tīrthas is being given below in alphabetical order. Their identifications, too, as far as possible, have been given:

Añkulaka

It seems to be the same as Ankola-tīrtha which is highly praised for its sanctity (*Matsya* 190.117-120). It may be identified with the modern town of Añkleśvar in Broach District.

Añkulaka (VII.i.107.92) - It was one of the 108 places sacred to Brāhmā. It comprised the shrine of Brāhmā who was worshipped under the name of *Brahmā-garba* (Añkulake Brahmagarbha).

Akrūra (VII.iv.16.38) represents Akrūra marked by a Śiva liṅga styled Akrūreśvara.

The Varāha Purāṇa places Akrūra at Mathurā on the bank of the Yamunā. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa¹⁴ also places it in Mathurā. It is known there as Akrūra-ghāṭ where a fair is held on 9th day of Śukla Pakṣa of Vaiśākha.

Arureśvara (V.i.230.97) or *Akrureśa* (V.III.230.97) placed on the Narmada; and

- 10. Pr.V., I.50.
- 11. Sk.P., VII.iii.50.2-5.
- 12. P.V., I. 49.53.
- 13. Ancient Historians of India: *Prthvirāja Vijaya*.
- 14. Bhag., II.18.33.

Akrūreśvara (V.i.26.35-37) - About 5 miles south of Broach near Arīka-leśvara, we find a sacred place called Akrūreśvara - a Śiva-liṅga set up there by Akrūra, the grandson of Kumbhakarṇa.

Agni-tīrtha,¹⁵ Adhyāya three of Badarikā Māhātmya deals with the glorification of Agni-tīrtha (Agnitīrthasya Māhātmyam),¹⁶ the sacred spot associated with the god Agni (tīrthasya Pāvakasya).¹⁷ It is also called Vanhi-tīrtha,¹⁸ and Pāvaka-tīrtha,¹⁹ which is sanctified by five sacred stones (Śilāḥ pañca),²⁰ viz., Nāradī, Nārasimhī, Vārāhī, Gāruḍī, and Mārkanḍeyī,²¹ named after Nārada, Narasiṁha, Varāha, Garuḍa and Mārkanḍeya, who performed penances there.²² It is placed on the Gandhamādana-sṛṅga to the south of Badrī²³ (modern Badrinath, Pauri, District Garhwal, U.P.).

Agni-tīrtha²⁴ is also mentioned as one of the twenty-four tīrthas placed near Setu,²⁵ "the ridge of rocks extending from the southern extremity of the Coromandel coast towards Ceylon (said to have been built for Rāma's passage to Laṅkā by Nala and other monkeys)".²⁶

Agni-tīrtha is also placed on the Western Sea-coast (Agnitīrtha Lavaṇāmbhasi),²⁷ for Lavaṇodadhi is placed in the West (Pratīcyam Lavaṇodadhih)²⁸ near Prabhāsa in Kathiawar.²⁹

Agastya-tīrtha,³⁰ is the famous tīrtha of Pāṇḍya-deśa.³¹ Mahābhārata places it near the southern sea-coast.³²

Agastyācala, a sacred hill of South India and the source of the river

15. Sk.P., II.iii.3.5.
16. Ibid., II.iii.3.1.
17. Ibid., II.iii.3.4.
18. Ibid., II.iii.3.8, 14,17.
19. Ibid., II.iii.3.12,15,16,17,18.
20. Ibid., II.iii.3.19.
21. Ibid., II.iii.3.20.
22. Ibid., II.iii.3.21-66; Chaps. 4 & 5 of II.iii (Badari M.).
23. Ibid., II.iii.4.3; II.iii.4.25-26; II.iii.5.48.
24. Ibid., III.i.2.108.
25. Ibid., III.i.2.104.
26. VM.S.E.D., p.613.
27. Sk.P., VII.i.139.39.
28. Ibid., VII.i.33.93.
29. Ibid., VII.i.29.18,33.13.
30. Sk.P., III.i.2.108.
31. H.Dh., Vol.IV, p.730.
32. Adi.P., CCXV.1,3.

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 Suvarṇamukhārī, corresponds to Agastya-malai, a hill in the Travancore District.

Agastyāśrama and *Agastyeśa*, are placed in the South on the bank of the river Suvarṇa-mukhārī near Veṅkaṭācala. A Śiva-liṅga named Agastyeśa was set up and worshipped by the sage Agastya in his hermitage.³³ The river Suvarṇa-mukhārī, a sacred river flowing in the North Arcot District with Kālahasti situated on its bank, issues from Agastyācala, and falls in the Southern Sea.³⁴ Agastya, too, coming down the hill took bath in the river Suvarṇamukhārī and set up a Śiva-liṅga Agastyeśvara,³⁵ which is the same as Agastyeśa. Thus we see that Agastyācala, Agastyatīrtha, Agastyāśrama and Agastyeśa or Agastyeśvara, all associated with the sage Agastya, the Āryan missionary, were situated in the ancient Pāṇḍya deśa³⁶ (Madura-Tinnevelly Districts).

Agastyeśvara,³⁷ is also mentioned as a holy spot situated on the bank of the river Narmadā.

Aṅkureśvara is a Śaiva tīrtha on the river Narmadā.

Aṅgāraka is also placed on the Northern bank of the river Narmadā (Uttara Narmadā kūle).³⁸

Aṅgāreśvara, a tīrtha marked by Śiva-liṅga set up by Brahmā in the Viṣaya of Avanti³⁹ (Western Malwa), is associated with Aṅgāraka, son of Śiva.⁴⁰

Accoda, mentioned as one of the one hundred eight sacred places associated with the goddess Śakti-dhāriṇī (acchode Śaktidhāriṇī),⁴¹ is identified by Swami Praṇavānanda with Mānasa-saras.⁴² Dr. Kane places

33. Sk.P., II.i.5.39.

34. Ibid., II.i.33.42.

35. Ibid., II.1.34.33-34.

36. Mbh. Vana Parva., LXXXVIII.13.

37. Sk.P., V.iii.64.1; Chap. 64 of V.iii deals with Agastyeśvara-Māhātmya, hence it appears to be an important tīrtha on the bank of the river Narmadā.

38. Sk.P., V.iii.148.1.

39. Ibid., V.i.37.42-44; the name of the Śiva-liṅga seems to have travelled across the seas, as is reflected by the name Angor Vat in Kambuja.

40. Ibid., V.i.37.41.

41. Ibid., V.iii.198.86.

42. Kailasa-Manasarovara, p.9; "Recently the author had read the description of Accodasara in Kadambari of Bāṇa Bhatta. He feels that this lake cannot be any other but the celestial Mānasa-saras".

it "at the foot of mount Chandraprabha".⁴³

Añjanyaśrama, is placed on the Northern side of the Vindhya.⁴⁴

Attahāsa represents one of the important Śaiva-tīrthas adored by Sun.⁴⁵ It has been identified with "a mountain in Himālaya".⁴⁶

A Śiva-linga of the same name is also placed in Vārāṇasi,⁴⁷ not far from Varṇā.

Anarka-tīrtha is placed on the bank of Sarasvatī,⁴⁸ not very far from the Paścima Sāgara⁴⁹ (Arabian Sea).

Amarakanṭaka, a famous region celebrated for its sanctity (Amarakanṭaka kṣetra)⁵⁰ and a noted Śaiva-tīrtha⁵¹ is placed on the bank of the river Narmadā (Narmadām amarkantaka).⁵² It is "a part of the Mekala hills in Gondwana in the territory of Nagpur in which the rivers Narmadā and Son take their rise".⁵³ Dr. Kane places it "in the Bilaspur District of C.P."⁵⁴

*Amareśa*⁵⁵ or *Amareśvara*⁵⁶ represents the Śiva-linga set up by gods on the northern bank of the river Revā (Amaresvaram revāyā uttare kūle).⁵⁷

*Amareśvara*⁵⁸ is also mentioned as a Śaiva-spot in Amarāvati.⁵⁹

Amalāṅga, one of the sixty-eight sacred spots associated with the solar cult, is sacred to the deity under the name of Dhūrjati (Amalāṅge ca Dhūrjatim).⁶⁰

43. H.D., Vol.IV, p.730.

44. Sk.P., V.i.54.17.

45. Ibid., I.iiiu.2.37; V.iii.108.28.

46. H.Dh., Vol.IV. p.735.

47. Sk.P., IV.ii.97.30.

48. Ibid., VII.i.35.49.

49. Ibid., VII.i.35.52.

50. Ibid., IV.ii.73.73.

51. Ibid., V.ii.74.38.

52. Ibid., V.iii.21.10.

53. H.G.A.I., p.303.

54. H.Dh., Vol.IV., p.732.

55. Sk.P., I.iiiu.2.26.

56. Ibid., V.iii.21.24.

57. Ibid., V.iii.21.24.

58. Ibid., I.i.7.30.

59. Ibid., I.i. 7.29 (i).

60. Ibid., VII.i.139.24.

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Ayodhyā,⁶¹ one of the seven moksapurīs,⁶² has been a famous tīrtha of high antiquity. It is still a tīrtha of great fame in the Faizabad District of U.P. It had the sacred shrine of Rohaṇa (Rohanam tu Ayodhyāyām).⁶³

Aruṇa (*Aruṇācalā*), a very sacred region (kṣetra) of the south is placed in the Dravida Deśa.⁶⁴

Arkeśvara, one of the sixty-eight sacred spots,⁶⁵ can not be identified.

Arbuda,⁶⁶ a sacred hill, the present Mt. Abu in Aravali range in Sirohi District, was very important hill as well as a forest, noted for their sanctity.

Skanda asserts that Aarbuda alone was free from the influence of the Muslims (Asprṣṭah Kalidoṣena) due to the efforts of Vasiṣṭha.⁶⁷ Tradition asserts that the main kṣatriya dynasties of Medieval India viz., Pratihāras, Paramāras, Cāhamānas and Cālukyas arose from the sacrificial pit of Vasiṣṭha at Arbuda.

Arālakesvara, a Śaiva-tīrtha, marked by Śiva under the name of Sūksma with Suksmā as His consort.⁶⁸ It may be identified with Arail, an ancient village situated on the right bank of the Jamunā at its confluence with the Gaṅgā.⁶⁹

Avantikā,⁷⁰ one of the seven Mokṣapurīes,⁷¹ represents Ujjayinī. It was marked by Gangati-Guhā.⁷² Avantini-devī⁷³ was the principal goddess of this place.

Ādikeśava represents one of the sacred Śaiva-tīrthas (liṅga)⁷⁴ of Vārāṇasi.

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61. Sk.P., II.iii.1.22; VI.108.35.
 62. Ibid., I.iiii.7.51.
 63. Ibid., VI.109.17(i).
 64. Ibid., I.iiii.4.10; A Section of Maheśvara Khaṇḍa viz., Arunācalā Māhātmya deals with the eulogisation of this tīrtha and kṣetra. It shows its importance.
 65. Ibid., VI.108.35.
 66. Ibid., I.ii.58.64.
 67. Ibid., VII.iii.1.6.
 68. Ibid., I.iiii.2.32.
 69. Nevill, Allahabad District Gazetteer, p.221.
 70. Sk.P., II.iii.1.22.
 71. Ibid., I.iiii.7.51.
 72. Ibid., II.iii.1.21-22; VII.iv.4.66; VII.iv.24.81; VII.iv.29.5.
 73. Ibid., V.i.26.31.
 74. Ibid., IV.ii.97.15.

Ādityeśvara represents a Bhāskara-tīrtha situated on the northern bank of Narmadā.⁷⁵ The sage Jābāli of Vasiṣṭha family caused the god Sun to appear in the form of Ādityeśvara at Śukla-tīrtha on the northern bank of the Narmadā,⁷⁶ as the sage suffering from leprosy wanted to get rid of the disease.⁷⁷

Ānandeśvara, a Śaiva-tīrtha,⁷⁸ is placed on the southern bank of the Narmadā.⁷⁹

Āśādhi, a sacred spot associated with Śiva under the name of Āśādhesa and His consort named Ratisa.⁸⁰ The Mahabharata mentions Āśādha as a name of Śiva.⁸¹

Indra-tīrtha⁸² is placed on the southern bank of the river Narmadā,⁸³ where a Śiva-liṅga was set up by Indra.⁸⁴

Ujjayini, one of the seven sacred cities (Avantikā), has been famous for its exalted shrine of Mahākāla.⁸⁵

Uttara Kuru, a famous country lying beyond the Himālayas, is stated to be one of one hundred-eight tīrthas associated with the Śākta Shrine called Oṣadhi (Oṣadhi Cottarakurau).⁸⁶

Uri-Saṅgama represents the confluence of the river Uri with Narmadā,⁸⁷ which was held very sacred. Uri or Or is a tributary of the Narmadā in Baroda region. It joins on the northern bank of the Narmadā (Uttare kūle Revāyā Uri Saṅgame).⁸⁸

Ekadvāra⁸⁹ is placed on the Northern bank of the river Sarasvatī.⁹⁰

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- 75. Ibid., V.iii.153.9-25.
 - 76. Ibid., V.iii.153.36-37.
 - 77. Ibid., Chap.153 of V.iii (Ādityeśvara-tīrtha-māhātmya).
 - 78. Ibid., V.iii.65.1-5.
 - 79. Ibid., V.iii.65.6-7; Chap.65 of V.iii, deals with Ānandeśvara-tīrtha-mahatmya.
 - 80. Ibid., I.iii.ii.2.28.
 - 81. Anu Sasana Parva, XVII.121(i).
 - 82. Sk.P., V.iii.118.1,2,39,40.
 - 83. Ibid., V.iii.118.1.
 - 84. Ibid., V.iii.118.38; Chap.118 of V.iii, deals with Indra-tīrtha-māhātmya.
 - 85. Ibid., II.viii.6.114.
 - 86. Sk.P., V.iii.198.87.
 - 87. Ibid., V.iii.85.14, 15,31,35,38,41,42,47,63,96.
 - 88. Ibid., V.iii.85.27.
 - 89. Ibid., VII.i.35.67,68.
 - 90. Ibid., VII.i.35.67.

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Ekāmra,⁹¹ one of the sixty-eight holy regions (kṣetras), represents the ancient name of Bhuvaneśvara in Orissa.⁹²

Eranḍī-tīrtha,⁹³ a tributary of the Narmadā in Baroda territory called Uri or Or.⁹⁴ Its confluence with Narmada (Erandi Saṅgamā)⁹⁵ was a very sacred tīrtha.

Onkāra, a very holy place situated on the bank of the river Narmadā.⁹⁶ It may be identified with Onkāra-Māndhātā (ancient Māhiśmatī).⁹⁷

Kanthadeśvara, represents sacred Śaiva spot.⁹⁸

Kaṭāha-tīrtha is placed on the sacred hill of the South named Veṅkaṭa,⁹⁹ towards its northern side.¹⁰⁰

Kadambapuri, a Śaiva kṣetra,¹⁰¹ may be identified with Vaijayantī, the capital of the Kadambas.

Kanakādri, a Śaivite kṣetra.¹⁰²

Kanakhala, a sacred spot situated on the bank of the Gāṅga¹⁰³ in the modern Saharanpur District, represents the ancient place where Daksa had performed the famous Yajña.¹⁰⁴

Kapi tīrtha, also called Hanumanteśvara,¹⁰⁵ is placed on the Southern bank of the river Narmadā.¹⁰⁶

91. Ibid., VI.108.32.

92. H.Dh., Vol.IV. p.750.

93. Sk.P., V.iii.198.1.

94. H.Dh., Vol.IV.,p.751.

95. Sk.P., V.iii.217.1.

96. Ibid., I.i.7.30; I.i.18.153; V.iii.85.14.

97. G.A.M.I., p.190.

98. Sk.P., V.iii.63.1.

99. Sk., II.i.28.1.

100. Ibid., II.i.28.82-83.

101. Ibid., I.iiii.2.76.

102. Ibid., I.iiii.2.51.

103. Ibid., I.iiii.2.35; V.ii.45.39; V.iii.21.5.

104. Ibid., I.i.2.11.

105. Ibid., V.iii.175.1; Ibid., V. iii. 174.2-11.

106. Ibid., V.iii.84.174.9.

Kapileśvara is placed on the Northern bank of the Narmadā at Bhṛgu kṣetra.¹⁰⁷ It is associated with the sage Kapila, an incarnation of Viṣṇu. He performed severe penances here to propitiate Rudra. Dr. Kane places it under 'Vārānasi'. It represents the Śaiva shrine of Kapilā tīrtha.¹⁰⁸

*Kapilā*¹⁰⁹ (*Kapilā tīrtha*),¹¹⁰ a tributary of the river Narmadā, joins the latter at Barwani in Central India.

Kapilāśrama,¹¹¹ or the hermitage of Kapilā represents the old site where Kapilavastu, the capital of the Śakyas, modern Tilaurakoṭa (Nepalese Terai, about 12 miles far from Shohratgarh, in Basti District (U.P.) was founded by the Ikṣvāku princes.¹¹²

*Kapoteśa*¹¹³ (*Kapoteśa-Sthalī*), a celebrated kṣetra, is placed near Kuśasthalī¹¹⁴ (Dwārakā), where Śiva performed penances in the form of Kapota.¹¹⁵ The sacred region, gifted with the natural beauty of trees, plants, vines, flowers, fruits, birds, and animals was also graced by the divine personality of Kapoteśvara (Śiva linga) marked by Mṛidāni (Parvatī) and Tryambaka (Śiva).¹¹⁶ The worship of Kapoteśa leads to the attainment of Puruṣottama (Viṣṇupada).¹¹⁷

Devīpurāṇa (Chap.77) deals with the "praise of the Kapota kuṇḍa; and the results of worshipping Śiva and Devī at Kapota-tīrtha with the use of Tāntrik mantras and performance of sixteen kinds of mudras viz., Yoni-mudrā, liṅga-mudrā, vyāpiṇī mudrā, chatra-mudrā,¹¹⁸ etc." Kapota-kuṇḍa and Kapoteśa-sthalī are identical.

Kamalālaya, a Śiva kṣetra, comprising the shrine of Vālmīkeśa, is associated with Śrī (Kamalā) who worshipped it.¹¹⁹

Kambala kṣetra, placed on the Narmadā, is associated with Śūlapāṇi-

107. Ibid., V III.84.17.

108. Ibid., V.iii. 84.12-16.

109. Ibid., VII.i.3.95.

110. Ibid., V.iii.39.1.

111. Ibid., II.ii.22.22.

112. Saundarānanda, I.18.41; Mahāvastu, I.351.17-19.

113. Sk., II.ii.12.130.

114. Ibid., II.ii.13.1-2.

115. Ibid., II.ii.13.9-10,14.

116. Ibid., II.ii.13.13-15.

117. Ibid., II.ii.13.16.

118. St.Up., Vol.II, p.57.

119. Sk., I.iiii.2.50.

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Maheśvara, styled Kambalakṣetrapa, the presiding deity of the kṣetra.¹²⁰

*Karavīraka*¹²¹ - Karavīra is modern Kolhapur. Dr. Kane locates Karavīraka tīrtha - (a) under 'Vārānasi', and (b) under 'Kubjāmraka (Māyātīrtha-Haridwāra).¹²²

Karoḍīśvara, represents a Śiva-liṅga, placed on the Narmadā, where the gods like Indra etc. killed the demons.¹²³ Since then the place was called Karoḍī.¹²⁴ It is specially noted for its worship on the eighth and fourteenth days of each fortnight observing *rātri-jāgaram* with sat-kathā-paṭha.¹²⁵ *Karodeśvara* (or *Karodeśvara*) seems to be placed near Indreśvara on the northern bank of the Revā.¹²⁶ It was also famous for the performance of the religious rite of dehatyāga.¹²⁷

Karṇotpala-tīrtha, a famous and fine spot of sanctity, is famous for sacred bath which relieves one from the pangs of separation from his friends, wealth, valour, piety and wife.¹²⁸ It is placed in the Hāṭakeśvara kṣetra of Camatkārapura near Gartā tīrtha on the river Śābhramati in the country of Ānarta.¹²⁹ Karṇotpala, daughter of king Satyasandha of Ānarta performed austerities near a tank which was subsequently named *Karṇotpala-tīrtha* after her. It is famous for sacred bath like Prayāga.¹³⁰

Kalakaleśvara is placed on the southern bank of the Narmadā.¹³¹ After killing the demon Andhaka in the company of gods, Maheśvara himself set up this sacred shrine. It followed the recitation of songs and prayers and due to the reverberating sound of Kalkala-nināda, it was named Kalkaleśvara, marked by great sanctity.¹³²

Kāka-tīrtha is placed on the bank of the river Sarasvatī near Dhāreśvara.¹³³

- 120. Ibid., V.iii.44.22-23.
- 121. Sk., VI.108.35.
- 122. H.D., p.765.
- 123. Sk., V.iii.62.1-5.
- 124. Ibid., V.iii.62.6.
- 125. Ibid., V.iii.62.7-8.
- 126. Ibid., V.iii.62.8-20.
- 127. Ibid., V.iii.68.14.
- 128. Ibid., VI.125.1-2.
- 129. Ibid., VI.125.44-45.
- 130. Ibid., VI.126.31-32.
- 131. Sk., V.iii.154.1.
- 132. Ibid., V.iii.154.2-6.
- 133. Ibid., VII.1.35.46.

Kāñci, an important city and tīrtha of Dravida-deśa, is known to have two sacred spots viz., Viṣṇu-kāñci and Śiva-kāñci respectively associated with Viṣṇu (Viṣṇu kāñcyāṁ Hariḥ) and Śiva (Śiva kāñcyam Śivah).¹³⁴ "Śiva Kāñci and Viṣṇu Kāñci form the western and eastern parts of the city".¹³⁵ It is graced by the presence of Kāmaśāsana (Śiva) along with the goddess Kāmāksī, the former wearing valaya is embraced by the latter engaged in penances.¹³⁶

Kānyakubja, modern Kanauj in Farrukhabad District (U.P.), is stated to have had the solar shrine of Mihira (Mihirām Kānya-kubje).¹³⁷

Kāmarūpa,¹³⁸ it is a famous Śakti-piṭha in Assam.

Kāmpilya,¹³⁹ capital of the Pāñcāla deśa, modern Kampil in Farrukhabad district (U.P.).

Kāśī - It is called Rudravāsa, the abode of Rudra-Śiva.¹⁴⁰ It is studded with Śiva-liṅgas (sarva liṅgamayi Kāśī),¹⁴¹ and is known as Muktipuri.¹⁴² Kāśī¹⁴³ is one of the most important tīrthas of this country, and Śiva, the Viṣveśvara, is its Presiding-deity. It is also styled Vaiśveśvara-kṣetra,¹⁴⁴ and Avimukta-kṣetra.¹⁴⁵ It extends for about ten miles (five yojanas).¹⁴⁶

The following tīrthas are placed in Vārānasi (Vārāṇasyāḥ tīrthāḥ),¹⁴⁷ Mahādeva-mahākūpa, Paśu-pāśa, Vigrahavatī Vārānasi, Gopreksa, Dadhic-eśvara, Atriśvara, Vaivijvarām-liṅga, Vedeśvara, Ādikeśva, Saṁgameśvara styled Prayāga (Prayāga sanjñaka liṅga), Kuntīsvaram, placed on the eastern bank of the river Varanā, Kāpila-hṛida, Ānusūyeśvara, Siddhi-Vināyaka, Hiranya-kaśipu liṅga, Hiranya-kūpa, Hiranyeśvara, Mundās-ureśvara, Vṛṣabheśvara, Skandeśvara, Saraveśa, Negameyeśvara, Viṣākheśa, Saraveśa, Nandiśvara, Sīladeśa, Hiranyakṣeśvara, Aṭṭahāsa,

134. Ibid., II.iii.1.42.

135. H.G.A.I., p.162.

136. Sk., I.iiii.2.41.

137. Ibid., VII.i.139.22.

138. Sk., VII.i.139.22.

139. Ibid., VII.i.139.28.

140. Ibid., IV.i.26.31.

141. Ibid., IV.i.3.36.

142. Ibid., II.iii.1.22; IV.i.6.64; IV.i.24.64.

143. Ibid., I.ii.45.109; I.ii.58.23; I.iiip.8.2; I.iiii.2.20-21; IV.i.2.62; IV.i.9.52; IV.i.11.14.

144. Ibid., IV.1.2.64.

145. Ibid., IV.i.2.105; IV.i.5.28; IV.i.10.102; IV.il.74.29.

146. Ibid., IV.i.26.31.

147. Ibid., Chap. XCVII.

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Varaṇeśa, placed on the bank of the Varanā, Koṭīśa, Śmaśāna-stambha comprising the figures of Mahārudra and Umā, Kapāleśa, marked by a Śiva-liṅga and a cave at a place where the sage Kapila attained siddhi, Matsyodarī, Satyavatiśvara on the bank of Matsyodarī, Indreśa, Karakoteśvar (near a Vāpi), Tuṅgeśvara, Mucukundesā,¹⁴⁹ Manikamikā,¹⁵⁰ Mukti-Lakṣmī piṭha,¹⁵¹ Jñāna-vāpi,¹⁵² Pañcanadahṛda,¹⁵³ Gokarṇa,¹⁵⁴ Brhaspatiśvara placed to the south of Candreśvara and south-west of Vireśa,¹⁵⁴ Daśāśvamedha,¹⁵⁵ and Karuṇeśa,¹⁵⁶ etc.

Kāverī-Narmadā-saṅgam¹⁵⁷ represents the confluence of Narmadā with its tributary Kāverī.

Kāyāvarohaṇa¹⁵⁸ represents modern Karvan, 15 miles south of Baroda, in Dabholi taluka.

Kumāreśa is placed on the southern coast (Dakṣinārṇava tīra),¹⁵⁹ where Kumārī set up a Śiva-liṅga.

Kumāreśvara,¹⁶⁰ seems to be the same as Kumāreśa.

Koṭīśvara,¹⁶¹ Śiva-liṅga of Koṭī tīrtha.

Koṭītīrtha¹⁶² - It is placed near Gokarṇa (Gokarṇe koṭītīrtham) 163 as well as Ujjayinī (Kotitirthe snatva Mahakāla-Haram dṛṣṭvā).¹⁶⁴

Kurukṣetra,¹⁶⁵ modern Kuruksetra in the Karnal District of the Haryana, is

148. Sk., IV.ii.97.7-238; Chap.XCVII of IV.ii deals with the sacred spots of Kāśī.

149. Ibid., II.viii.6.114; IV.i.7.72.

150. Ibid., IV.i.7.80.

151. Ibid., II.iii.1.30.

152. Ibid., II.iii.1.30.

153. Ibid., II.iii.6.25.

154. Ibid., II.iii.17.62.

155. Ibid., IV.i.33.178; IV.ii.52.66-69; IV.ii.83.83.

156. Ibid., IV.ii.94.27.

157. Ibid., V.ii.29.9.41.

158. Ibid., V.ii.1.5.

159. Ibid., I.ii.1.9.

160. Ibid., V.ii.63.1.

161. Sk., VII.i.35.50.

162. Ibid., I.ii.42.244.

163. Ibid., III.iii.2.119.

164. Ibid., I.iii.2.34.

165. Ibid., I.ii.51.50; I.ii.58.23,62; II.iii.6.56.

famous for sacred bath at the time of solar-eclipse (Kuruks̄etre mahākṣetre Rāhugraste Divākare).¹⁶⁶ It was famous for its sun-temple.¹⁶⁷

Kedāra,¹⁶⁸ a famous Himālayan tīrtha, associated with the shrine of Rudra-jālāka (Kedare Rudrajālakam),¹⁶⁹ is situated in the Pauri-Garhwal (U.P.).

Kailāsa,¹⁷⁰ the celebrated abode of Śiva, is situated about 25 miles to the north of Mānasarovara.

*Kṛttivāsa*¹⁷¹ - Ekāmraka, modern Bhuvaneshvar (Orissa) was also called Kṛttivāsa,¹⁷² an important abode of Śiva.

*Kumbhakonam*¹⁷³ - One of the oldest cities of South India, situated on the bank of the river Kāverī represents modern Kumbhakonam in Tanjore district.

Kumāradhārikā,¹⁷⁴ was a sarasī (pond) of great sanctity.

*Kusāvarta*¹⁷⁵ - Dr. Kane¹⁷⁶ places it - (a) 'near Nasik', Tryambakśevara, and (b) 'near Haridwāra'.

*Kusumeśvara*¹⁷⁷ - Skanda places it to the South of Narmadā. Dr. Kane places it 'under Narmadā'.¹⁷⁸

Kusmāṇḍeśvara,¹⁷⁹ 'under Vārānasi'.¹⁸⁰

*Koṅkana*¹⁸¹ was southern country of great celebrity, also called Aparānta.

166. Ibid., II.viii.6.83; dealt with details in the list of towns.

167. Ibid., V.iii.13.46.

168. Ibid., I.iiii.2.23; I.iiip.i.2 (i); V.ii.1.4; V.ii.21.26; VI.108.30; VII.i.3.92.

169. Ibid., VI.108.40(i). रुद्रक्षेत्रे च केदारे

170. Ibid., I.iiii.2.80.

171. Ibid., I.iiii.2.38.

172. H.D., p.750.

173. Sk., I.iiii.2.73.

174. Sk., II.i.1.65.

175. Ibid., V.ii.28.38; V.ii.74.39.

176. H.D., p.773.

177. Sk., V.ii.150.1.

178. H.D., p.773.

179. Sk., VII.i.35.76.

180. H.D., p.773.

181. Sk., VII.i.139.26.

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Kotiyajñya,¹⁸² a tīrtha on Narmadā.

Kośala,¹⁸³ a famous country associated with the life of Rāma.

*Khadgatīrtha*¹⁸⁴ - Dr. Kane places it 'under Sābharamati', and 'under Godāv-
ari', on the Northern bank'.¹⁸⁵

Gayā - Noted for Pitr-śrāddha¹⁸⁶ (modern Gayā in Bihar), is one of the most
important kṣetras of great antiquity, hallowed by Maṅgalā (Parvati) and
Prapitāmaha (Śāṅkara).¹⁸⁷

*Gaṅgā*¹⁸⁸ - River Ganges - one of the Sapta-ganga, the most sacred river of
our culture.

*Gangadvara*¹⁸⁹ - It is the same as Haridvara.

*Gaṅgāsagar Saṅgaria*¹⁹⁰ - Bay of Bengal, particularly the mouth of the
Ganges where it joins the sea.

*Gandhavati*¹⁹¹ - A sacred river of Avanti, associated with Mahākālavana.

*Gandhāra*¹⁹² - A famous country of Uttarāpatha.

*Gabhastiśvara*¹⁹³ - 'Under Vārāṇasi'.¹⁹⁴

*Gopeśvara*¹⁹⁵ is placed on the Narmada (Gopeśvaram Narmadātale).¹⁹⁶

Godhana,¹⁹⁷ a mountain.¹⁹⁸

182. Ibid., V.iii.21.23.

183. Ibid., VII.i.139.26.

184. Ibid., I.iiip.12.5; I.iiiu.4.50.

185. H.D., p.768.

186. Sk., I.iiiu.2.22; V.iii.211.22; VII.iv.296; V.ii.6.12; VI.108.27.

187. Ibid., I.iiiu.2.38.

188. Ibid., I.iiip.6.105.

189. Ibid., V.ii.74.39.

190. Sk., I.ii.7.29.

191. Ibid., V.ii.1.13.

192. Ibid., VII.i.139.23.

193. Ibid., II.iv.6.44.

194. H.D., p.751.; Sk., VI.33.154.

195. Ibid., V.iii.162.1; V.iii.174.1.

196. Ibid., V.iii.174.1.

197. Ibid., VII.i.139.20.

198. H.D., p.753.

*Gokarna ksetra*¹⁹⁹ - North Kanara. "A place sacred to Śiva on the western coast about 30 miles south of Goa in the Kumta Taluka of North Kanara District".²⁰⁰

*Guheśvara*²⁰¹ - 'Under Vārāṇasi'.²⁰²

*Gandhamādana*²⁰³ - It is the sacred hill near Badrinath marked by the hermitage of Nara and Nārāyana.

*Godāvarī*²⁰⁴ - Famous river of the Deccan.

*Gaṇḍikā*²⁰⁵ - Modern river Gaṇḍaka.

*Gautami*²⁰⁶ - River Gautami or Godāvari.

Ghōṇa,²⁰⁷ is placed on the Śeṣa hill in the south.

*Chandrabhāgā*²⁰⁸ - It is associated with the Konaraka kṣetra near Konark.

*Chitrotpalā*²⁰⁹ - River rising from Vindhya and called Mahanadi,²¹⁰ well-known river of the Deccan.

*Carmanvatī*²¹¹ - River Chambal tributary of the Yamuna.

*Cakra*²¹² - Here it seems to be located in Ayodhyā. Many tirthas of this name (Cakra-tīrtha) are placed in the different parts of the country:-

1) to the West of Cakra-Hari,²¹³

199. Sk., III.iii.2.82; III.iii.3.78; VI.108.29.

200. H.D., p.753.

201. Sk., VII.i.35.68.

202. H.D., p.755.

203. Sk., I.iiii.2.67.

204. Ibid., II.iii.1.19.

205. Ibid., II.iii.1.20.

206. Ibid., II.iii.1.19.

207. Sk., II.1.26.65.

208. Ibid., II.iii.1.20.

209. Sk., II.iii.1.20.

210. H.D., p.744.

211. Sk., II.iii.1.21.

212. Ibid., II.iv.4.29; II.viii.1.97; II.viii.6.10.

213. Ibid., II.viii.6.10.

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- 2) on the southern sea-coast (*Dakṣiṇasyodadhe sthiṭam*),²¹⁴ 'Under Setu',²¹⁵
- 3) on the Narmadā,²¹⁶
- 4) on the Gomati,²¹⁷ 'Under Dwarkā'.²¹⁸

Cakravāpi (*Naimiṣe*)²¹⁹ - It is the modern Cakratīrtha at Nimasar in Sitapur District of U.P. on the bank of the river Gomati.

Camatkārapura, with the shrine of Hāṭakeśvara,²²⁰ is the same as Ānandapura in modern Ahmedabad district.

*Carukā Sangama*²²¹ - On the northern side of the Narmadā.

*Jatā*²²² - It may be the same as *Jatākuṇḍa*, under Sānandūra, to the south of Malaya mountain and north of the Sea.²²³

*Jambūmārga*²²⁴ - It was a sacred forest situated between Pushkar and Mount Abu.

Jābāli (*Veṅkaṭādru*)²²⁵ is placed on the Veṅkaṭa hill of the South.²²⁶

*Jāgeśvara*²²⁷ - It is a sacred spot of the same name in the district of Almora, comprising many temples.

*Jālandhara*²²⁸ - It is modern Jullundher in the East Panjab. It was the capital of the great daitya-king Jālandhara. It was also a famous Śakti-piṭha.

*Jvālāmukha*²²⁹ - It is an ancient site in the Dera Gopipura, tahsil of the Kangra

214. Ibid., III.1.9.77.

215. H.D., p.742.

216. Sk., V.iii.90.72.

217. Ibid., VII.iv.2.15; VII.iv.5.42-43.

218. H.D., p.742.

219. Sk., II.viii.6.115.

220. Sk., VI.19.25.

221. Ibid., V.iii.21.22.

222. Ibid., III.i.2.108.

223. H.D., p.759.

224. Sk., VII.iii.40.6.

225. H.G.A.I., p.42.

226. Sk., II.ii.25.2.

227. Ibid., VI.108.35; VII.i.40.14.

228. Ibid., I.iii.2.63.

229. Ibid., I. iiiu.2.64.

district in the East Panjab, situated on the road from Kangra town to Nadaun.²³⁰

*Jvāleśvara*²³¹ - Jvāleśvara is placed near Amarakanṭaka.

Tālaka (*Tālakakhya*),²³² a mahākṣetra, may be the same as Tāla tīrtha under Vārāṇasi.²³³

*Tapati*²³⁴ - River Tāpti.

*Tamraparnī*²³⁵ - River Tamraparnī of ancient Pāṇḍyadeśa.

*Tumba*²³⁶ is placed on Veṅkaṭa-giri (tumbe) the giri gahvara).

Tryambaka (*anu godāvarītīrma*)²³⁷ is an important holy place in Maharashtra. The river Godāvarī rises from here. Skanda Purāṇa describes it as situated along the river Godāvarī.

*Tīrtha-traya*²³⁸ - associated with gods, ṛṣi and pitṛ, is placed to north-east of Agastyeśa.

Trisaṅgama,²³⁹ a famous Saura-tīrtha, represents the place of great sanctity (trayāñām saṅgamo yatra duṣprāpyo-daivatairapi), a sacred confluence of the rivers Sarasvatī and Hiranyā with the sea.²⁴⁰

*Dārutīrtha*²⁴¹ { It may be the same as Devadaru, where Śiva
*Dārukeśvara*²⁴² { took the form of Dāruka and famous as Devadāru (*Vana*),
which can be located in Almora district. {It may
also be placed on the river Sarasvatī in Dwārkā.

*Dvāravatī*²⁴³ { Dwārkā is the sacred city of Kṛṣṇa, hence

230. H.G.A.I., p.86.

231. Sk., V.iii.28.129, 130.

232. Sk., I.iiii.2.36.

233. H.D., p.811.

234. Sk., II.iii.1.19.

235. Ibid., II.iii.1.20.

236. Ibid., II.i.1.70.

237. Ibid., I.iiii.2.74.

238. Ibid., II.i.34.21.

239. Ibid., VII.i.183.1.

240. Ibid., VII.i.183.2; VII.i.241.1.

241. Ibid., V.iii.30.1.

242. Ibid., V.iii.21.83.

243. Sk., VII.i.35.75.

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*Dvārakā*²⁴⁴ { it is a very holy town even today.

*Deva tīrtha*²⁴⁵ - A sacred pond (*taṭāka*)²⁴⁶ is placed - (a) 'on the north bank of the *Godāvarī*', (b) 'Under Narmadā', and (c) 'Under Sābhramati'.²⁴⁷

*Devapura*²⁴⁸ - It may be identified with one of the two villages, Devada in the Srungavarapukota or Devadī in the Chicacole Taluk.²⁴⁹

*Dāmodara tīrtha*²⁵⁰ - Damodara is an important tīrtha of the Prabhāsa kṣetra. It comprised the shrine of Kṛṣṇa called Damodara. It was situated on the Raivataka hill.

*Dandaka*²⁵¹ - The Dandaka forest, connected with the story of Śrī Rāma Candra, "seems to have covered almost the whole of Central India from Bundelkhand region to river Krishṇa".²⁵²

Dandī Muṇḍī, is a Śaivite tīrtha, comprising the shrines of Śiva as Muṇḍī and Śivā as Dandikā.²⁵³

*Dardura Kṣetra*²⁵⁴ - It represents Dardura hill, the southern portion of the Eastern Ghat called (Nilgiri hills).²⁵⁵

Dāśarathi Puri,²⁵⁶ is the same as Ayodhyā.

*Daśāsvamedha Tīrtha*²⁵⁷ - Daśāsvamedha Ghat of Vārāṇasi. There was also a Daśāsvamedha tīrtha at Prayaga.

Deva Prayāga,²⁵⁸ may be identified with Devaprayaga of Pauri Garhwal

244. Ibid., I.ii.58.71; II.iii.22.

245. Ibid., V.iii.201.1.

246. Ibid., II.i.1.78.

247. H.D., p.746.

248. Sk., VII.i.139.21.

249. H.G.A.I., p.150.

250. Sk., VII.ii.1.78.

Ibid., VII. i. 1.89.

251. Sk., VI.108.35.

252. H.G.A.I., p.280.

253. Sk., I.iiii.2.29.

254. Ibid., II.iii.1.23.

255. H.D., p.745.

256. Sk., II.viii.3.28.

257. Ibid., VI.ii.83.83.

258. Ibid., V.i.68.1.

district (U.P.).

Dhanuṣkoti,²⁵⁹ is a very sacred tīrtha of the South placed near Rāmeśvaram.

Dharmakṣetra,²⁶⁰ is placed to the south of Badrinath.

*Dharmāranya*²⁶¹ - A very sacred region glorified in a separate section of our text (SK.III.ii). It deals with the sanctity of the holy spots, placed in Dharmāranya kṣetra,²⁶² stated to be 18 thousand in number (aṣṭādaśa sahasrāṇi).²⁶³ Here Dharmarāja performed penances.²⁶⁴ It is also a sacred forest of Gayā.²⁶⁵

*Dhārā Tīrtha*²⁶⁶ - It was a sacred place of Avanti-kṣetra.

*Dhauta Pāpa*²⁶⁷ - River Dhutapāpa, also called Pāpanāśana, is placed 'under Godāvarī'.²⁶⁸ There is a sacred place on the Gomati of the same name near Sultanpur (U.P.).

*Naimiṣa kṣetra*²⁶⁹ - It is modern Nimasara, in Sitapur district of U.P.

*Nara-Nārāyaṇa Āśrama*²⁷⁰ - Badrīnātha in Garhwal district (U.P.).

*Nakuliśa*²⁷¹ - The chief shrine of Nakuliśa, the founder of Pāsupata sect called Nakuliśa or Nakuleśvara was at Karavan, 15 miles south of Baroda, and 8 miles north east of Miayagam railway station. It is the same as Kāyāvarohana.

*Nṛsiṁha kṣetra*²⁷² - It may be placed in Orissa. Indradyumasara is in

259. Ibid., III.i.2.110; III.i.18.14.

260. Ibid., II.iii.8.47.

261. Ibid., III.i.35.7.

262. Ibid., III.ii.1.19.

263. Ibid., III.ii.2.25.

264. Ibid., III.ii.3.40-41.

265. Ibid., III.ii.4.90 - *Vide Dr. Barua on Gaya and Bodh Gayā*, Vol.I., p.16-17. It is part at least of the precincts of the Bodha Gaya temple representing the jungle of Uruvela of Uruvilva of Buddhist literature. Ramayana also places it near about Gayā (Ram.I.32.7). It was gifted with beautiful forests, birds and beasts (III.ii.2.13-18).

266. Ibid., V.i.31.58.

267. Ibid., V.iii.110.1.

268. H.D., p.789.

269. Sk., I.ii.51.90; I.ii.58.23; I.iiip.2.25; V.ii.1.4; VII.i.3.92; II.iii.7.1.

270. Ibid., II.iii.2.25; II.iii.7.56.

271. Ibid., I.ii.58.62.

272. Ibid., II.ii.34.35.

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Puruṣottama-khaṇḍa or kṣetra i.e. Orissa. The Nṛsinha kṣetra is placed to its north.

*Nepāla kṣetra*²⁷³ - Nepāla, a very famous Śakti-Śīṭha, is also associated with Pāśupata-yoga.

*Narmadeśa*²⁷⁴ {
*Narmadeśvar*²⁷⁵ { Śaiva shrines placed on the Narmadā.

*Nāgālaya*²⁷⁶ - It is placed to the south of Mahākālavana in Ujjayinī.

*Nāga tīrtha*²⁷⁷ - According to Dr. Kane, it is placed - (a) 'under Vārāṇasi', (b) 'under Godāvāri', (c) 'under Tripushkara', and (d) 'under Mathurā'.²⁷⁸

*Nara tīrtha*²⁷⁹ is the same as Badarī.

*Nilaparvata*²⁸⁰ - It is associated with Puruṣottama-kṣetra of Orissa.

*Prayāga*²⁸¹ - Prayāga near Allahabad, U.P., is styled tīrtharāja²⁸² comprising the Saṅgameśa²⁸³ as well as Mahavaṭa²⁸⁴ styled Aśoka.²⁸⁵

*Puṇyavardhana*²⁸⁶ - The same as Pundravardhana in N. Bengal.

*Pulahasrama*²⁸⁷ - It is the same as Śālagrāma²⁸⁸ near source of Gaṇḍakī river.

*Prabhāsa*²⁸⁹ - The kṣetra named Prabhāsa has been graced by the divine lustre (etat Prabhāśikam kṣetram prabhayā dipitarṇ mayā). It is for this

273. Ibid., IV.ii.69.110; VI.108.35.

274. Ibid., IV.ii.92.1.

275. Ibid., V.iii.38.68.

276. Ibid., V.i.65.9.

277. Ibid., VII.i.163.1.

278. H.D., p.783.

279. Sk., VII.i.35.4.

280. Ibid., VII.i.74.39.

281. Ibid., I.ii.51.90; I.ii.58.62; I.iiip.2.22; VII.i.3.92.

282. Ibid., II.iii.36.39.

283. Ibid., II.iii.35.34; VII.i.3.92.

284. Ibid., III.i.8.53.

285. Ibid., IV.i.33.180.

286. Ibid., VII.i.139.22.

287. Ibid., II.viii.22.21.

288. H.D., p.793.

289. Sk., I.iiiu.2.59; V.ii.1.40; V.ii.74.38.

reason²⁹⁰ that it was called Prabhāsa in Ādi Kalpa (Prabhasamityuktamādi kalpe).²⁹¹

"In the second (kalpa) all the gods including Indra got lustre from that of 'Mine (prabhā labdhā mama prabhābhā) so it was named as Prabhāsikam (tena Prābhāsikam smṛtam), where great gods are influential (prabhava-vanto....yatre santi mahasurāḥ).²⁹²

To its east is Taptodaka svāmi and Mādhava is in west.²⁹³ Sea is in the south and the river Bhadrā flows in the north.²⁹⁴ The sacred spots of Prabhāsa are the Kṣetra, Pīṭha and Garbhagrha.²⁹⁵ Firstly the extent of the Kṣetra is twelve yojanas;²⁹⁶ the extent of Pīṭha is five yojanas²⁹⁷ and that of Garbhagrha is about two miles.²⁹⁸ The sacred and famous Kṣetra of Prabhāsa is situated in the country of Saurashtra, placed to the south-west of Kūrma (Kurmasya nairṛite bhāge sthitām vai dakṣiṇe pare).²⁹⁹

*Puṣkara*³⁰⁰ - It is modern Pokhar about seven miles north of Ajmer.

*Puṣkara-traya*³⁰¹ - Beginning from the rivers Candrabhāgā and Sarasvatī in the north and to the south of the river Karatoyā lies the Puṣkar-traya.³⁰²

*Pātālēśvara*³⁰³ - It seems to represent Śiva-liriga in Pātāla, the Dvipantara or Insular India. Skanda refers to Śambhu-pīṭha in that region, beyond the sea (Pāre Pare Samudrasya).³⁰⁴

*Padmaka*³⁰⁵ is placed to the south of Somanātha (dakṣiṇe Somanāthasya).

*Pundarika*³⁰⁶ - It is the same as Pañḍupura, modern Pañḍharapur.³⁰⁷

290. Ibid., VII.i.11.44.

291. Ibid., VII.i.11.45.

292. Ibid., VII.i.11.46.

293. Sk., VII.i.4.15.

294. Ibid., VII.i.4.18.

295. Ibid., VII.i.4.12.

296. Ibid., VII.i.4.13.

297. Ibid., VII.i.4.13.

298. Ibid., VII.i.4.14.

299. Ibid., VII.i.167.32; VII.i.167.33.

300. Ibid., VII.i.183.3.

301. Ibid., VII.i.2.26; VII.i.51.90; VII.i.3.92; VII.i.35.101.

302. Ibid., VI.45.1; VI.45.14; VI.2.53.

303. Ibid., V.iii.21.23.

304. Ibid., I.i.22.2.

305. Ibid., VII.i.29.2.

306. Sk., VII.i.35.47.

307. H.D., p.793.

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*Pṛthu tīrthodaka*³⁰⁸ is the same as *Pṛthūdaka* (Pehoa, Haryana).

*Pṛthūdaka*³⁰⁹ represents modern Pehoa placed on the south bank of Sarasvatī in the Karnal District of Haryana.

Pilapila - It is a sacred tīrtha of Kāśī³¹⁰ styled Trī-śrota, served by three rivers.³¹¹

*Pingaleśvara*³¹² - At Pingalāvartta, a sacred spot,³¹³ comprising devakhāṭa,³¹⁴ near Bhṛgukaccha,³¹⁵ Śiva relieved Piṅgala (Agni) of his diseases and at the instance of Piṅgala, Śiva decided to stay there under the name of Piṅgaleśvara. It was also associated with Sun. The sacred pond, Devakhāṭa, contained the water brought by Rudra in his kamāṇḍala from the different tīrthas.³¹⁶ Dr. Kane rightly places it 'under Narmadā'.³¹⁷ Skanda, too, places it near Narmadā.³¹⁸

Piṇḍāraka,³¹⁹ is located "In Khambhalia Mahal of Kathiwar". Dey says it is 16 miles to the east of modern Dvarākā".³²⁰

Skanda places it in Ayodhyā kṣetra³²¹ on the bank of Sarayū.³²² Piṇḍāraka is associated with the goddess Śuleśvari, under the name of Dhṛti (Dhṛtiḥ Piṇḍārake).³²³ Skanda upholds the sanctity of Piṇḍāraka placed on the Kumbhekusi hill.³²⁴ Piṇḍāraka seems to be known by the other name of Prācīna³²⁵ and Śivalinga here on the bank of the river Prācī Sarasvatī was styled Prācīneśvara.³²⁶

- 308. Sk., V.ii.74.38.
- 309. Ibid., VII.i.139.18.
- 310. Ibid., IV.ii.75.12; V.ii.45.89.
- 311. Ibid., IV.ii.75.47.
- 312. Ibid., V.iii.176.2.
- 313. Ibid., V.iii.176.1.
- 314. Ibid., V.iii.176.4.
- 315. Ibid., V.iii.176.8.
- 316. Ibid., V.iii.176.6-10.
- 317. H.D., p.791.
- 318. Sk., V.iii.176.23.
- 319. Ibid., V.iii.176.32.
- 320. H.D., p.790; G.D., p.157.
- 321. Sk., II.viii.10.13.
- 322. Ibid., II.viii.10.15.
- 323. Sk., V.iii.198.86.
- 324. Ibid., VII.i.35.58.
- 325. Ibid., VII.i.35.58.
- 326. Ibid., VII.ii.35.59

Prācīneśvara - It represents Śiva-linga at Pracīna, a sacred spot situated on the northern bank of the Sarasvatī in Prabhāsa-kṣetra.³²⁷ It was also known as Prācīneśa.³²⁸

Pāṇḍava tīrtha, annihilator of sins, was noted for sacred bath.³²⁹ It led to the attainment of material desires and spiritual bliss to the Pāṇḍavas, who took bath here.³³⁰ It is placed to the south of Śoṇa hill (dakṣiṇe Soṇaśailasya) on the Aruṇācala in the south.³³¹

Pindatāraka is celebrated for relieving the pilgrims of the sin of Brahma-hatyā.³³²

Priyālavana is noted for the performance of the rite of Dehatyāga, which destroys the ties of karma, by bestowing Mukti upon the devotee.³³³ It is famous kṣetra associated with Ambikāpati.³³⁴

Potr-kṣetra - It is stated to be one of the most sacred kṣetras.³³⁵

*Puruṣottama kṣetra*³³⁶ - It is the Puri district of Orissa. Extending for the ten yojanas (tat kṣetrarām viṣṭṛtam daśa yojanām)³³⁷ upto Virajamāṇḍala, it lies on the sea-shore of Dakṣinodadhi, graced by the beautiful mountain of Nilachala.³³⁸ As a most celebrated region blessed to give the merits of all the tīrthas, it lies to the north of the sea coast and to the south of Mahānadi.³³⁹

Comprising the entire region from the river Chitrotpalā upto Dakṣiṇārāṇava it is held very sacred.³⁴⁰

Padmā associated with the shrine of the Sun called Padma Sambhava (Padmāyām padmasambhavah),³⁴¹ represents the river of the same name.

- 327. Ibid., VII.i.36.38-39.
- 328. Ibid., VII.i.35.63.
- 329. Ibid., II.i.1.72-74.
- 330. Ibid., I.iii.6.120.
- 331. Ibid., I.iii.6.121.
- 332. Ibid., VII.ii.12.30(i).
- 333. Ibid., VII.ii.12.34-35.
- 334. Ibid., I.iii.2.58.
- 335. Sk., II.i.33.40.
- 336. Ibid., VII.iv.29.6.
- 337. Ibid., II. ii. 1.11; II. ii. 12.74.
- 338. Ibid., II.ii.12.74.
- 339. Ibid., II.ii.1.31.
- 340. Ibid., II.ii.12.75.
- 341. Ibid., VII.i.139.25 (i).

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*Payisvinī*³⁴² is a sacred river identified with modern Pisani, a tributary of Yamunā.

Pitṛtīrtha held eight times more sacred than Gayā, is stated to be famous for Pitṛi-srāddha.³⁴³

Pāpamocana - At the distance of 200 Dhanus from Rnamocana Tīrtha placed on Sarayū, Pāpamocana³⁴⁴ is a sacred spot of Ayodhyā Kṣetra. Narahari, a Brāhmaṇa of Pāñcāla, attained Viṣṇu-pada here.³⁴⁵

Pañcanada is a sacred spot of Kāśī, where the offering of dīpa (dīpa-dāna) in the month of Kārtika is held to be an act of great merit.³⁴⁶

Piśācamocana Tīrtha - A sacred place of Ayodhyā-kṣetra is placed to the east of Gayākūpa.³⁴⁷ By performing here the sacred rites of bath followed by acts of charity one is relieved of Piśāca-yoni.³⁴⁸ Hence people are asked to bathe and give gifts for the purpose of Piśācamukti, on Caturdaśī of Mārgaśīrṣa.³⁴⁹

Phalgu tīrtha,³⁵⁰ sacred river of Bihar (Phalgu) flows towards the north past the town of Gayā and ultimately joins a branch of Punpun.³⁵¹

Badarī or Badaryāśrama,³⁵² the abode of Nārada,³⁵³ is modern Badrinath in Garhwal (Pauri district). This holy place is situated on the Gandhamādana hill marked by the hermitage of Nara and Nāryāṇa,³⁵⁴ which is also associated with Śiva.³⁵⁵ Thus the fragrant hill of Gandhamādana washed by the sacred water of the Gaṅgā, Nārāyaṇāśrama at Badarikā,³⁵⁶ is an ideal resort and refuge (Badarīm śaraṇam śreyā) graced by the presence of Devadeva Janārdana.³⁵⁷

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- 342. Sk., II.iii.1.21 (i).
 - 343. Ibid., II.iii.6.4.
 - 344. Sk., II.vii.2.34.
 - 345. Ibid., II.viii.2.40.
 - 346. Ibid., II.iv.7.184.
 - 347. Ibid., II.viii.9.12.
 - 348. Ibid., II.viii.9.13.
 - 349. Ibid., II.viii.9.13-14.
 - 350. Ibid., V.ii.42.36.
 - 351. H.D., p.790.
 - 352. Sk., I.ii.45.116.
 - 353. Ibid., II.ii.10.62.
 - 354. Sk., I.iii.2.23.
 - 355. Ibid., I.iii.8.2.
 - 356. Ibid., II.iii.2.31-32.
 - 357. Ibid., II.iii.2.28 (ii)-29.

Bandī tīrtha is also tīrtha of Kāśī Kṣetra.³⁵⁸

Bālamandāna (or *Balamandapa*),³⁵⁹ a celebrated tīrtha, is placed near Camatkārpura.³⁶⁰

*Bāhudā*³⁶¹ - It is a sacred river. Pargiter identifies it with modern Rāmgangā. According to N.L. Dey it was the river Dhavalā, now called Dhumela or Burhi Rapti, a feeder of Rapti.³⁶² According to Dr. B.C. Law³⁶³ there was another river of this name in the Deccan.

*Barbarī*³⁶⁴ - It is to be identified with "the Barbaroi of Ptolemy" and the Barbaricum or Barbaricon mentioned in the Periplus of Erythraen Sea. It was a market town and a port situated in the mouth of the Indus. It was one of the towns of the islands of the Indus delta.³⁶⁵ Thus it was the sacred spot situated in Sindhā-Sāgara.

*Barkareśvara*³⁶⁶ is also placed on the southern sea coast (dakṣiṇārṇavatīre). It may also be identified with Bakarei of Ptolemy.³⁶⁷

Brahmapura - Brahmapura Kṣetra is placed near Ārya Puṣkarinī in the Deccan where Indrajita set up Dhūrjaṭi.³⁶⁸

Brahmatīrtha - (a) It is placed on Ghanācalā, to the south of Kiśkindhā, 10 yojanas to the west of the river Suvarṇamukhāri,³⁶⁹ (b) Brahmatīrtha,³⁷⁰ or Brahmakuṇḍa,³⁷¹ manifested by Brahmā, is placed near Badarikāśrama. It may be the same as Brahmakapāla associated with piṇḍadāna, (c) It was a tīrtha of Kāśī, a pond or a kūṇḍa noted for sacred bath which led to the attainment of Brahmavidyā.³⁷²

358. Ibid., IV.ii.83.86-88.

359. Ibid., VI.20.67.

360. Ibid., VI.21.2.

361. Ibid., II.iii.1.21.

362. G.D., p.167.

363. H.G.A.I., p.70.

364. Sk., I.ii.37.1.

365. H.G.A.I., p.70.

366. Sk., I.ii.1.11.

367. C.A.I., pp.366-379.

368. Sk., I.iii.2.53.

369. Ibid., II.i.39.26-27(i).

370. Ibid., II.iii.6.8.

371. Ibid., II.iii.6.22.

372. Ibid., IV.ii.83.97.

Brahmakunda - (a) A sacred kunda of Ayodhyā graced by Brahmā, who resides here along with other gods. Here Brahmā performed a sacrifice at the end of his pilgrimage knowing Ayodhyā to be the celebrated abode of Hari.³⁷³ It was full of beautiful plants and aquatic birds.³⁷⁴ Thus Brahmakunda was one of the most exalted tīrthas.³⁷⁵ It is placed to the east of Cakra-tīrtha,³⁷⁶ at the distance of 700 Dhanus, south-west of Rnamocana tīrtha,³⁷⁷ (b) It is also placed near Setu in the South.³⁷⁸

Brahmeśvara Kṣetra is placed on the bank of the Godāvarī where lived an exalted ascetic, the disciple of Durvāsā.³⁷⁹

Brahmāvarta-A celebrated region of high antiquity and sanctity was famous for its pilgrimage.³⁸⁰ A Śaiva tīrtha, placed on the Revā, is hallowed by Brahmā.³⁸¹ It is to be identified with Brahmāṇa of the Garuḍa P., modern Barmhān near Narsinghpur (M.P.).

Bṛhaspatīśvara is mentioned to be a Śaiva tīrtha of Kāśī.³⁸²

Brahmaśilā is placed on the river Kalyā, a branch of Suvarṇamukhāri.³⁸³

*Bhadravatā*³⁸⁴ is placed on the north side of the Himālaya.³⁸⁵

Bhārabhūti,³⁸⁶ a sacred spot of great celebrity, is placed 'Under Nar-madā'.³⁸⁷ Bhāra and Bhūti respectively represent Śiva and Parvatī (yatra Bhārabhidhaḥ Śambhuḥ Bhutyākhyā Bhūdharaṭmjā).³⁸⁸

*Bhṛgutunga*³⁸⁹ - (i) A mountain in Nepal on the eastern bank of Gaṇḍaka which was the hermitage of Bhṛgu. (ii) According to Nīlakanṭha, the

373. Ibid., II.viii.2.2-4.

374. Ibid., II.viii.2.5-7.

375. Ibid., II.viii.2.9-19.

376. Ibid., II.viii.2.20.

377. Sk., II.viii.2.22-23.

378. Ibid., III.i.2.106.

379. Ibid., II.vi.14.4-6,38.

380. Ibid., II.iii.8.49.

381. Ibid., V.iii.31.1.

382. Ibid., IV.i.17.59-62.

383. Ibid., II.i.35.7.

384. Ibid., I.iiii.2.65.

385. H.D., p.738.

386. Sk., I.iiii.2.31.

387. H.D., p.738.

388. Sk., V.iii.209.4.

389. Ibid., V.ii.74.40.

celebrated commentator of Mahābhārata, it is the Tuṅganātha mountain which is one of the Pañca-kedāras.

*Bhrgutīrtha*³⁹⁰ - It is placed 'Under Narmadā'. Dey says it is Bheraghat containing a temple of 64 yoginis, 12 miles to the west of Jabalpur on the Narmadā".³⁹¹

*Bhīmeśvara*³⁹² represents a Śivālaya on the bank of the river Godāvarī.³⁹³

*Bhaṇḍārī tīrtha*³⁹⁴ represents the sacred spot where Dhanada (Kubera) performed penances. Carities and gifts given here bring protection to the devotee's wealth.

Bhārgaleśvara,³⁹⁵ a Śaivite tīrtha celebrated for the rite of Prāṇa-tyāga.

Bhojakaṭa - It was a sacred spot situated in the kingdom of king Gādhi on the bank of the river Kauśikī. There was also a grand temple of Gaurī on the bank of the river, where daughter of king Gādhi came to worship the goddess (Sk., VI.165.12-19). Umā was worshipped by all the people (Sk., VI.165.20-21). R̥cīka arrived at this place in the course of his pilgrimage (Sk., VI.165.12).

It lay not far from Kānyakubja situated on the Gangā, where R̥cīka performed penances (SK., VI. 165.33), by virtue of which he succeeded in getting horses demanded by Gādhi. This place became known by the name of *Aśvō tīrtha* (Sk., VI.165.37).

*Mahīsāgara Saṅgama*³⁹⁶ represents the Sea near Cambay where the river Mahī falls into sea.

*Mandalesvara Kṣetra*³⁹⁷ - It had the Śaiva shrine of Śrikanṭha.³⁹⁸

*Mahākāla*³⁹⁹ represents the famous Śaivite shrine of Ujjainī. It was a sacred

390. Sk., V.iii.181.1.

391. H.D., p.739.; G.D., p.34.

392. Sk., V.iii.77.1.

393. Ibid., VII.ii.6.113.

394. Ibid., V.iii.107.1.

395. Ibid., V.iii.152.1.

396. Ibid., I.ii.3.26; I.ii.41.178; I.ii.58.23,61.

397. Ibid., VI.108.33.

398. Ibid., VI.109.12.11.

399. Sk., I.ii.1.11.

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forest of Avanti Kṣetra,⁴⁰⁰ washed by the river Gandhavati.⁴⁰¹

*Maheśvar Kṣetra*⁴⁰² - Maheśvara is a modern town in the Indore district on the north or right bank of the Narmadā. It represents Mahesa or Chuli Maheśvara on the bank of the Narmadā, same as Māhiṣmatī.

Maṇimuktānadi is a sacred river flowing near Vṛuddhācala.⁴⁰³

*Mayūrapura*⁴⁰⁴ may be identified with Māyāpuri, which represents ancient Mayūra.⁴⁰⁵

*Mathurā*⁴⁰⁶ - Modern Mathurā (U.P.).

*Mukti Kṣetra*⁴⁰⁷ - Kāne places it 'Under Śālagrama'.⁴⁰⁸

*Mānasa*⁴⁰⁹ - Manasarovara.

Meru - Meru, Mandar, Malaya and Mahendra⁴¹⁰ are the important mountains associated with the cultural life of the ancient India.

Mahendra represents the mountain range extending from the mouth of the Ganges or Orissa to Madura. In the Ganjam District there is a peak called Mahendragiri.

Malaya is the sacred hill country of Pandya Deśa of the South.

*Mahālaya*⁴¹¹ may be identified with Mahālaya liṅga of Vārāṇasi,⁴¹² or the same as Oṁkāranātha or Amareśvara.

*MātriKEśvara*⁴¹³ is placed to the east of the Kāverī (tributary of the Narmadā

400. Ibid., V.ii.1.5.

401. Ibid., V.ii.1.13.

402. Ibid., IV.iii.69.114.

403. Sk., I.iiii.2.46.

404. Ibid., I.iiii.2.71.

405. G.D., p.129.

406. Sk., II.iii.1.22.

407. Ibid., II.iii.1.37.

408. H.D., p.782.

409. Sk., III.i.2.110.

410. Ibid., V.ii.74.41.

411. Ibid., V.ii.74.40.

412. H.D., p.776.

413. Sk., V.iii.28.139.

on the southern bank of the Revā).

Matṛīrtha - (a) is placed on the southern bank of the Narmadā near Saṁgama.⁴¹⁴

*Meghanāda tīrtha*⁴¹⁵ - It was also called Garjana.⁴¹⁶ It is placed 'under Narmadā'.⁴¹⁷

*Maṇināgeśvara*⁴¹⁸ or *Maṇināga*⁴¹⁹ was established by Maṇināga on the northern bank of the Narmadā, where he performed great penance.⁴²⁰

Maṅgaleśvara,⁴²¹ established by Maṅgala, is placed 'under Narmadā'.⁴²²

Madhuskanda,⁴²³ famous for sacred bath, was situated near Dadhiskanda, probably, on Narmadā.

*Māndaveśvara*⁴²⁴ or *Mandavya*,⁴²⁵ is placed in Avanti Maṇḍala.

*Mandavyeśvara*⁴²⁶ is placed on the bank of Sarasvatī.

Marusthala,⁴²⁷ is associated with the solar shrine of Karṇa.

*Madhya Makeśvara Kṣetra*⁴²⁸ or *Madhyameśvara*, sacred Śaivite shrine placed on the bank of Mandākini.

*Madhyārjuna*⁴²⁹ - A sacred tīrtha of the south.

*Mahodaya*⁴³⁰ (*Kanauj*), is associated with the Gaṅgā.

414. Sk., V.iii.66.1-9.

415. Ibid., V.iii.35.25; VII.i.35.48.

416. Ibid., V.iii.35.26.

417. H.D., p.781.

418. Sk., V.iii.72.1,39,48,51.

419. Ibid., V.iii.72.56,63.

420. Ibid., V.iii.72.32.

421. Ibid., V.iii.69.1-2.

422. H.D., p.779.

423. Sk., V.iii.79.1.

424. Ibid., V.iii.172.67-68.

425. Ibid., V.iii.172.69.

426. Ibid., VII.i.35.73.

427. Ibid., VII.i.139.20.

428. Ibid., VI. 108.30.

429. Sk., I.iiii.2.47.

430. Ibid., VII.i.35.63(ii)-64.

Misra-Ksetra,⁴³¹ represents a Saura-tīrtha also called Trisāṅgama tīrtha, because it marks the confluence of the rivers Sarasvatī and Hiranyā with sea.⁴³²

*Marddaka*⁴³³ is associated with the solar shrine of Sthavira.

Rāma Setu, comprising Rāmeśvara Linga,⁴³⁴ represents the celebrated tīrtha of Rāmeśvaram⁴³⁵ (Rāmeśvaram nāma Rāmasetau pavitritam),⁴³⁶ modern Rāmeśvaram. Rāma Tīrtha⁴³⁷ is placed at Setu.

Rāma tīrtha,⁴³⁸ associated with Kurukṣetra (kuruksetre Rāmatīrthe),⁴³⁹ represents Rāma-hṛda of Kurukṣetra.

*Rāmajanma*⁴⁴⁰ represents a sacred spot of Ayodhyā, where Dāśarathi Rāma was born.

Ravi Kṣetra represents the sacred region lying to the west of Śambhu-shrine in Dharmāranya, where the gods, Nasatyas (Āśvina) were born.⁴⁴¹

Ravi-tīrtha is placed on the northern bank of the river Revā (Revāyā Uttare Kūle).⁴⁴²

*Rāmeśvara*⁴⁴³ is placed on the southern bank of the Narmadā.

*Rohika*⁴⁴⁴ is associated with the solar shrine of Kumāra (Rohike tu Kumara-khyam). It is the corrupt form of Rohitaka (Haryana).

Rudra-Gaya,⁴⁴⁵ a famous place of pilgrimage, is eulogised for the rite of Godāna.

431. Ibid., VII.iv.29.6.

432. Ibid., VI.i.183.1.

433. Ibid., VII.i.139.25.

434. Ibid., III.i.2.28.

435. Ibid., I.ii.34.105.

436. Ibid., III.i.1.17-18.

437. Ibid., III.i.2.107.

438. Ibid., II.iii.1.23.

439. Ibid., II.iii.1.38.

440. Ibid., II.viii.10.19.

441. Ibid., III.ii.13.1-2.

442. Sk., V.iii.70.1.

443. Ibid., V.iii.134.1.

444. Ibid., VII.i.139.25(i).

445. Ibid., VII.i.335.6.

Rudrapada is associated with *Gayā* (*Gayayām va Rudrapāde*).⁴⁴⁶ Dr. Kane also places it under *Gayā*.⁴⁴⁷ There are several places of this name.

*Rudra Koṭī*⁴⁴⁸ is placed (a) 'Under Kuruksetra and Sarasvatī', (b) 'Under Vārāṇasī', and (c) 'Under Narmadā'.⁴⁴⁹

Raivatak Kṣetra,⁴⁵⁰ represents the hill-country, watered by the sacred river *Suvarṇarekhā*⁴⁵¹ (*Sonrekhā*) near Junagarh opposite to Girnar. The Junagarh Inscriptions of Rudradamana I and Skanda Gupta refer to it.⁴⁵²

*Raivatodyāna*⁴⁵³ represents the beautiful forest region near Junagarh.

*Rṇamocana*⁴⁵⁴ is sacred spot of Ayodhyā placed near Sarayū at the distance of 700 Dhenus north-east of Brahmakuṇḍa.⁴⁵⁵

Lāṭa represents probably the chief town of *Lāṭa* (South Gujarat), a famous country of Western India. It was famous for solar shrine of Dharmāditya (*Dharmādityam tu Lāṭāyām*).⁴⁵⁶

*Lankādvāra*⁴⁵⁷ represents a Śaiva-tīrtha, near the northern point of Ceylon representing a gate between India and Ceylon.

Lākula (*Lākuleśvara*) represents a famous Śaivite tīrtha marked by the presence of Lakuliśa-Hara and Pārvatī.⁴⁵⁸ The sacred spot and the shrine was also called *Lakuleśvara*⁴⁵⁹ (same as Nakuliśa or Nakuleśvara).

*Lunkeśvara*⁴⁶⁰ - *Kālapṛṣṭha*, a demon performed severe penances on the bank of the *Gāṅgā*,⁴⁶¹ Dakṣiṇa *Gangā* or *Revā*, marked by the sanctity of

446. Ibid., VII.ii.12.29.

447. H.D., p.797.

448. Sk., V.ii.74.40.

449. H.D., p.797.

450. Sk., VII.ii.1.8.

451. Ibid., VII.ii.1.3.

452. Girnar Rock Inscription of Rudra Damana I, Lines 1,5; Hist. Lit. Ins., p.62, F.N.4.; Junagarh Rock Ins. of Skanda Gupta; line 16, Hist. Lit. Ins., p.96, F.N.5.

453. Sk., VII.i.202.11.

454. Sk., II.viii.2.22-23.

455. Ibid., II.viii.2.22-23.

456. Ibid., VII.i.139.25.

457. Ibid., VI.108.39.

458. Ibid., I.iii.2.30.

459. Ibid., V.iii.172.68.

460. Ibid., V.iii.67.1,101.

461. Ibid., V.iii.67.3-5.

Lunkeśa.⁴⁶²

Loṭaneśvara,⁴⁶³ is placed on the northern bank of the Narmadā.⁴⁶⁴ On the sea-shore, where Narmadā joins the sea.⁴⁶⁵ The Samgama was the famous for sacred bath.⁴⁶⁶

Lauhitya,⁴⁶⁷ marked by solar shrine of Mahāteja, represents the river Brahmaputra or Brahmaputra-valley.

Lohita is also associated with the sun-cult comprising the solar shrine of Keśavārka.⁴⁶⁸ Lohita is also known to be tributary of the river Brahmaputra. There is also a district named Lohita in Assam.

*Lakṣamaṇa Tīrtha*⁴⁶⁹ represents one of the twenty-four tirthas placed in Setu-Prānta.

Vardhamāna,⁴⁷⁰ comprising the solar shrine of Śāmba, probably represents Vardhamānapura, modern Burdwan.⁴⁷¹

*Vaṭeśvara*⁴⁷² - The same as Vaṭesvaranātha (same as Śilāsamgama). The temple of Baṭesvaranātha is situated 4 miles to the north of Kahalgaon (colgong on the Patharaghata Hill. Dr. Kane places it - (a) 'Under Narmadā', (b) 'Under Gayā', (c) 'Under Prayag', (d) 'Under Puruṣottam', and (e) 'Under Vārānasi'.⁴⁷³

*Vastramārga*⁴⁷⁴ - It is the same as Vastrāpatha.

*Vastrāpathakṣetra*⁴⁷⁵ represents the region around Girnar in Kathiawad. It was also called as Raivataka Kṣetra.⁴⁷⁶

462. Ibid., V.iii.67.66-69.

463. Ibid., V.iii.220.17.

464. Ibid., V.iii.220.1.

465. Ibid., V.iii.220.17,18,23.

466. Ibid., V.iii.220.24-25.

467. Sk., VII.i.139.24.

468. Ibid., VII.i.139.21.

469. Ibid., III.i.2.107.

470. Ibid., VII.i.139.22.

471. H.G.A.I., p.269.

472. Sk., VII.i.35.69.

473. H.D., p.819.

474. Sk., VI.108.31.

475. Ibid., VII.ii.2.1; VII.ii.14.78; VII.ii.16.72.

476. H.D., p.819.

*Varuṇeśvara*⁴⁷⁷ is placed (a) 'Under Vārāṇasi', (b) 'Under Narmadā'.⁴⁷⁸

Varāha Kṣetra,⁴⁷⁹ modern Barmula in Kashmir, stands on the right bank of the river Vitastā at the head of the western entrance to the Kashmir valley. It is sacred to Ādivarāha.⁴⁸⁰

*Varāha Parvata*⁴⁸¹ - It represents Baramula hill of Kasmira.

*Varāha tīrtha*⁴⁸² situated on the northern bank of Narmadā. Kane also places it on Narmadā.⁴⁸³

Vimaleśvara,⁴⁸⁴ marked by the sanctity of Devaśila, is placed on the Narmadā, where it was noted for sacred bath.

*Viśveśvara*⁴⁸⁵ represents one of the five lingas of Vārāṇasi.⁴⁸⁶

*Vāstupada*⁴⁸⁷ - It was a sacred spot marked by the advent of Vāstu Puruṣa in Prabhāsa Kṣetra. It was set up by Kātyāyana (Ch.CXXXII of Nāgra Khaṇḍa).

*Vārāṇasi*⁴⁸⁸ - Vārāṇasi, one of the most celebrated tīrtha.

Viṣṇupada - It is placed in Hātakēśvara Kṣetra of Ānarta.⁴⁸⁹

Veda Vadana,⁴⁹⁰ a sacred Śākta tīrtha, is associated with the goddess Gāyatrī.

*Vyāsa tīrtha*⁴⁹¹ represents Vyāsāśrama placed on the Narmadā.⁴⁹²

477. Sk., V.iii.21.25.

478. H.D., p.818.

479. Sk., II.iii.1.23; II.iv.4.29.

480. H.D., p.818.

481. Sk., V.ii.74.39.

482. Ibid., V.iii.132.1.

483. H.D., p.818.

484. Sk., V.iii.43.1-2.

485. Ibid., VI.108.28.

486. H.D., p.823.

487. Sk., VI.132.4.

488. Ibid., I.iiip.2.20; VI.108.27.

489. Ibid., VI.24.8-13.

490. Ibid., V.iii.198.89.

491. Sk., V.iii.97.1.

492. Ibid., V.iii.97.92-93.

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*Vyātipateśvara*⁴⁹³ is placed on the northern bank of the Narmadā.

*Vārunī*⁴⁹⁴ comprised the shrine of Varuṇeśvara.

Vyāghrapura,⁴⁹⁵ a Śaiva-Kṣetra, is placed in Tillikānana, where Patañjali is stated to have worshipped Śiva.

*Vedāranya*⁴⁹⁶ represents a forest in Tanjore, 5 miles north of Point Calimere. It was the hermitage of Agastya.

Venuvana,⁴⁹⁷ famous for Vēnu-Vana-Vihara, was associated with Rājagrīha, which denotes modern Rajgiri near Patna in Bihar Pradesh.

*Vīrakōṣṭha*⁴⁹⁸ represents a famous Śivakṣetra, where Vālmīki attained Siddhi in the art of poetic composition by performing penances.

Viśraṇti,⁴⁹⁹ probably, represents a sacred spot of Mathurā situated on the bank of the river Yamunā, where Kaṁsa was killed by Kṛṣṇa.

*Vetravati*⁵⁰⁰ is modern river Betwa.

Viṣṇu Kāñcī represents that part of the sacred town of Kanchi which is associated with Viṣṇu, while the other town-ship associated with Śiva is called Siva-Kāñchi.⁵⁰¹

*Vanhi tīrtha*⁵⁰² - It was a famous tīrtha marked by five sacred stones (Śilāḥ pañca) named Nāradī, Nārasimhī, Vārāhī, Gārudi, and Mārkanḍeyī.⁵⁰³

Vasudhārā,⁵⁰⁴ a sacred spot of great sanctity, is associated with Mānas-odbheda.

*Vighneśa*⁵⁰⁵ is placed on the Sarayū in Ayodhyā Kṣetra to the west of Piṇḍaraka.

493. Ibid., V.iii.21.23.

494. Ibid., I.i.7.29.

495. Ibid., I.iiii.2.42.

496. Ibid., I.iiii.2.6.

497. Ibid., I.iiii.2.69.

498. Ibid., I.iiii.6.35.

499. Ibid., II.iii.1.34.

500. Ibid., II.iii.1.20.

501. Ibid., II.iii.1.42.

502. Sk., II.iii.3.14-17.

503. Ibid., II.iii.18.20.

504. Ibid., II.iii.6.60.

505. Ibid., II.viii.10.16.

Vetāla Varada tīrtha is placed to the south of Cakratīrtha (near Setu)⁵⁰⁶ on the southern sea-coast,⁵⁰⁷ where a son of a Brahmana was relieved of Vetalātā.⁵⁰⁸

*Vidyādhara*⁵⁰⁹ represents a sacred spot of Avanti Maṇḍala, placed to the north of Gaṅgāti Guha.⁵¹⁰ It was famous for the sanctity of its bath.⁵¹¹

*Śakra tīrtha*⁵¹² - It is placed on the south bank of Narmadā, where Śakra (Indra) performed penances to propitiate Umāpati.⁵¹³

*Śaṅkha tīrtha*⁵¹⁴ situated on the bank of the river Vyaghrapadā.⁵¹⁵

Śaṅkhāvarta,⁵¹⁶ a famous Viṣṇu-kṣetra is placed on the southern bank of Nyaṅkumati⁵¹⁷ noted for red stones (citrāṅkita śilā... raktagarbhā) representing conch.⁵¹⁸

*Śaṅkukarna*⁵¹⁹ represents a Śaiva shrine placed on the southern boundary of Vārāṇasi.

*Śālagrāma*⁵²⁰ is a very sacred place near the source of Gaṇḍakī river.

*Satadru*⁵²¹ represents the river Sutlej.

Sukla tīrtha,⁵²² placed on the Revā,⁵²³ was as sacred on the Narmadā as was the sanctity of Prayāga on the Gaṅgā.⁵²⁴

506. Ibid., III.i.8.3.

507. Ibid., III.i.9.77.

508. Ibid., III.i.9.81-90.

509. Ibid., V.i.11.10.

510. Ibid., V.i.11.9-10.

511. Ibid., V.i.11.11-13.

512. Ibid., V.iii.61.1.

513. Ibid., V.iii.51.2-3.

514. Ibid., VI.10.22.

515. Ibid., II.i.34.42.

516. Sk., VII.i.335.2.

517. Ibid., VII.i.335.1.

518. Ibid., VII.i.335.3-4.

519. Ibid., VI.108.29.

520. Ibid., III.i.52.102.

521. Ibid., II.iii.1.21.

522. Ibid., I.ii.3.5; III.ii.35.5.

523. Ibid., I.ii.3.5.

524. Ibid., II.vi.15.47; II.v.58.5.

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*Śvetāranya*⁵²⁵ or *Śvetakānana*⁵²⁶ represents a sacred forest associated with Śiva.

*Śiva tīrtha*⁵²⁷ represents one of the twenty-four tīrthas placed in Setu-Prānta.

*Śiprā*⁵²⁸ represents a sacred river of Avanti.

*Śūlabheda*⁵²⁹ is a place of pilgrimage near the confluence of the Narmadā with a mountain-stream called Sarasvatī. It represents modern Śulpan Mahadeo, corrupt form of Śulapāni another name of Śūlabheda.⁵³⁰

Śūla tīrtha is placed on the bank of the Narmadā at a place called Bhadrakāli Sarīgama (i.e. confluence of Bhadrakāli with the Narmadā).⁵³¹ It comprised the shrine of Śuleśvara and Śūleśvari.⁵³²

*Śikhā*⁵³³ comprising the Pañcāyatana shrine of Śikhā-Śiva, seems to be placed on the Narmadā.

*Saptasārasvata*⁵³⁴ is placed on the Narmadā near Māndhātrpura (Mandhata).

*Samvaura tīrtha*⁵³⁵ is placed on the bank of the Narmadā,⁵³⁶ comprising a shrine of Bhāskara (Sun), worshipped after taking bath in Narmadā.⁵³⁷ Sage Samvaura is stated to have set up a shrine of Samvaureśvara.⁵³⁸

*Sarpa Tīrtha*⁵³⁹ is also placed on the Narmadā, where Nagas performed penances.

*Sāvitri Tīrtha*⁵⁴⁰ is placed on the Narmadā, where Sāvitri was accomplished

525. Ibid., I.iii.2.43.

526. Ibid., III.i.52.7.

527. Ibid., III.i.2.108.

528. Ibid., V.i.2.5.

529. Ibid., V.iii.44.9.

530. G.D., p.196.

531. Sk., V.iii.198.1.

532. Ibid., V.iii.198.5.

533. Ibid., V.iii.208.1.

534. Ibid., V.iii.21.27.

535. Ibid., V.iii.164.1,4,7.

536. Ibid., V.iii.164.4.

537. Ibid., V.iii.164.5.

538. Ibid., V.iii.164.11-12.

539. Ibid., V.iii.161.1,6.

540. Ibid., V.iii.200.1,11.

by performing penances. According to Dr. Kane Sāvitrī river forms boundary between Ratnagiri and Kolaba Districts.⁵⁴¹

Gāyatrī is associated with Gayā and Vārāṇasi.⁵⁴²

*Svarṇabindu*⁵⁴³ is placed on the Narmadā.

Svargadvāra, comprising the Śaiva shrine of Svargadārēśvara,⁵⁴⁴ represents the sacred spot near Yajñavāta of Dakṣa⁵⁴⁵ i.e. Kanakhala (Saharanpur District). Śiva set up a Dvāra (Gate) here guarded by Śiva-gaṇas.⁵⁴⁶ Mahādeva (Liṅga) is to be worshipped here.⁵⁴⁷ A Śaiva-shrine, placed in Mahākalavana to the east of Kapālēśvara,⁵⁴⁸ was also called Svargadvāra.

Svargadvāra is placed in Ayodhyā Kṣetra on the bank of the Sarayū at the distance of 100 dhanus from Pāpamocana.⁵⁴⁹ It was noted for the performance of the rite of Anaśana.⁵⁵⁰

Svargadvāra is also placed on Narmadā.⁵⁵¹

*Svarṇabindu*⁵⁵² placed on the Narmadā comprised the shrine of Śuleśvari.⁵⁵³

Somanātha,⁵⁵⁴ placed on the banks of the Sarasvatī in Saurashtra,⁵⁵⁵ is a celebrated Śiva-shrine of great sanctity. It is also called Somatīrtha,⁵⁵⁶ situated on the south-western coast of Saurashtra in the famous Prabhāsa Kṣetra.⁵⁵⁷

*Sapta Godāvari Tīrtha*⁵⁵⁸ marks the spot where the Godāvari falls in the

541. H.D., p.804.

542. Ibid., p.753.

543. Sk., V.iii.207.1.

544. Ibid., V.ii.9.1.

545. Ibid., V.iii.9.14.

546. Ibid., V.iii.9.24-30.

547. Ibid., V.iii.9.31-34.

548. Ibid., V.iii.9.35-36, 41-46.

549. Ibid., II.viii.2.44-45.

550. Ibid., II.viii.3.4-30.

551. Ibid., V.iii.21.27.

552. Ibid., V.iii.207.1.

553. Ibid., V.iii.207.12.

554. Ibid., V.iii.220.53.

555. H.D., p.806.

556. Sk., I.iii.2.48.

557. Somanatha, p.93.

558. Sk., VI.108.37.

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ocean with seven mouths.⁵⁵⁹ According to Mr. Dey, it is a place of pilgrimage situated at Solangipur 16 miles from Pithāpura, one of the stations of the east coast Railway not far from Rajamahendri in the Godāvarī district.⁵⁶⁰

*Setubandha*⁵⁶¹ - Adam's Bridge between India and Ceylon.

*Saṅgamesvara*⁵⁶² is placed on the bank of the Sarasvatī.

Saṅgaleśvara, is placed to the west of the river Rṣitoyā at the distance of about two miles (Rṣitoyāpaścime tu).⁵⁶³

Śaukara,⁵⁶⁴ seems to represent Śūkara Kheta (ksetra), Mod. Soron situated on the west bank of the Ganges in the Etah District U.P.).

Somakunḍa, a sacred tīrtha established by Moon (Soma),⁵⁶⁵ is highly eulogised for its sanctity.⁵⁶⁶ It may be placed near Pañcadhārā in Badari Khaṇḍa.

Sindhu,⁵⁶⁷ the sacred river Indus.

Sarayū,⁵⁶⁸ the sacred river Sarayū.

*Svāmī Puṣkariṇī*⁵⁶⁹ - It is the same as *Svāmī Tīrtha*⁵⁷⁰ of Tirupati in Madras.

*Siddhavatā*⁵⁷¹ is placed on the bank of the river Manimuktā on the Vṛddhācala hill in the South.

*Siddhanātha*⁵⁷² is placed near Mahisāgara Samgama.

Siddhakūpa,⁵⁷³ a sacred kūṇḍa (Siddha Kunḍa) was dug by Skanda near the

559. H.D., p.801.

560. G.D., p.178.

561. Sk., VII.i.29.79.

562. Ibid., VII.i.35.50.

563. Ibid., VII.i.298.1.

564. Ibid., II.iii.1.48.

565. Ibid., II.iii.7.11.

566. Ibid., II.iii.7.12-31.

567. Ibid., II.iii.1.21.

568. Ibid., II.iii.1.20.

569. Sk., II.i.1.78.

570. Dey., G.D., p.199.

571. Sk., I.iiii.2.49.

572. Ibid., I.ii.48.9.

573. Ibid., I.ii.36.19.

shrine of Siddheśvar.⁵⁷⁴ It is placed near Mahīsāvara-Saṅgama.

Siddheśa,⁵⁷⁵ one of the five sacred Lingas placed near Mahīsāvara Saṅgama.

Saubhadra,⁵⁷⁶ one of the five tīrthas placed on the Southern Sea.

*Stambha*⁵⁷⁷ - Stambha Tirtha, is situated at Mahī-Sāvara-Saṅgama,⁵⁷⁸ the place where the river Mahī joins the sea. Stambha is, thus, the same as Khambayata (modern Cambay).

*Suvarṇamukharī (tīrtha)*⁵⁷⁹ - A very sacred river of the South.

*Mūlasthāna Surya-tīrtha*⁵⁸⁰ is another name of Mūlasthāna (Mod. Multan in Pakistan).

*Svarṇa Khanī*⁵⁸¹ - The sacred spot of Ayodhyā.

*Sitākunda*⁵⁸² - The sacred tank of Ayodhyā.

*Śrīsaila*⁵⁸³ - A sacred hill situated in the Karnal District on the south side of the Krishna river 50 miles from Krishna Station.

*Sri Sundara Ksetra*⁵⁸⁴ is placed on the bank of the river Vegavatī (Vaigai).

Śrī Raṅga,⁵⁸⁵ modern Srirangam, situated on the Kāverī about 2 miles north of Trichinopoly and Coloroon.⁵⁸⁶

*Śrīgī-tīrtha*⁵⁸⁷ was noted for the performance of the rite of Piṇḍadāna. It is glorified for its sanctity.⁵⁸⁸ It represents Śringeri Maṭha of South India.

574. Ibid., I.ii.36.20-21.

575. Ibid., I.ii.1.11.

576. Ibid., I.ii.1.11; H.D., p.803.

577. Sk., I.ii.3.27, 45-110.

578. Ibid., I.ii.3.26-27.

579. Ibid., I.iii.2.40.

580. Ibid., V.iii.197.1.

581. Sk., II.vii.4.63-64.

582. Ibid., II.vii.6.1-7.

583. Ibid., VI.108.35.

584. Ibid., I.iii.2.72.

585. Ibid., II.viii.22.22.

586. H.D., p.807.

587. Sk., V.iii.215.1-2.

588. Ibid., II.viii.2.24-35.

*Hari Kṣetra*⁵⁸⁹ - Harikṣetra is placed in Dharmāranya region⁵⁹⁰ to the south of Suvarṇa.⁵⁹¹ Harikṣetra, the abode of Hari,⁵⁹² marks the spot where Gaja devoted to Viṣṇu was rescued from the clutches of Grha on the bank of the river Gaṇḍaki.⁵⁹³ It is still a sacred spot called Haripur (Harikṣetra) in Champarana District of Bihar.

*Hemakūṭa*⁵⁹⁴ - The sacred hill of Kailāsa was also called Hemakūṭa.

Hāṭakeśvara is very sacred region of Ānarta Deśa (North Gujrat).⁵⁹⁵ It comprised many sacred spots.⁵⁹⁶

There is also a reference to the sacred spot of the same name placed in Pātāla (Śrī Hāṭakesvaram-Kṣetram Pātālastham śrutam), "where Vairocani (Bali) is engaged in the worship of the deity (yatra vairocanirde-vam svapada prāptaya arcayati)".⁵⁹⁷ Dvīpāntara is identical with Pātāla,⁵⁹⁸ which is associated with the shrine of Hāṭakeśvara (Patale Hāṭakesvaram).⁵⁹⁹

TEMPLE OF SOMANATHA

Recent excavations have revealed the existence of three water outlets from the cella, each above the other. This indicates that as one temple fell down another was built above its ruins and the cella placed exactly where it had been. It is evident, therefore, that at least three temples were built on the present site, each of which were either destroyed or fell into ruin at different periods.

The earliest epigraphic reference to the temple of Somanātha is contained in the Veraval-praśasti of Bhāva Br̥haspati, which is as follows:

"King Soma built a golden temple, then Kṛṣṇa.... a silver one; the

589. Ibid., VII.iv.29.6.

590. Ibid., III.ii.33.16.

591. Ibid., III.ii.31.72.

592. Ibid., II.iii.1.40.

593. Ibid., II.iv.28.19-22.

594. Sk., I.iiiu.2.61.

595. Ibid., VI.4.57; VI.108.39.

596. Ibid., VI.26.76.

597. Ibid., I.iiiu.2.79.

598. Ibid., VII.ii.19.29-30.

599. Ibid., VI.109.50 (ii).

illustrious Bhīmadeva (erected) the jewel peak (Ratnakūṭa) with most resplendent large stones; the latter which in course of time had become ruinous, this most excellent king Kumārapāla converted into the building called Meru (V.15)".⁶⁰⁰

Dr. A.K. Majumdar adds: From this it is evident that in the 12th Century none knew how the temple originated, hence the mythological beginning. Bhīma's temple was, however, historical, and it was made.... of stone. But according to Merutunga, the temple which was repaired by Kumārapāla was made of wood.... We have to reject Meerutunga's version...."⁶⁰¹ Dr. Majumdar concludes that "the first temple on this site was probably constructed in the 10th century; about a century later Bhīma I built the second temple on its ruin, and after the second temple had fallen into decay, Kumārapāla built another temple after another hundred years had gone by".⁶⁰²

The first temple built by Soma might have belonged to the age of Śaśāṅka, the great Śaiva King of the 7th Century A.D.

Someśvara Pratiṣṭhā

Śaśāṅka or Soma styled Dvijeśa, leader of Brāhmaṇas,⁶⁰³ was himself a Brāhmaṇa who championed the cause of Brāhmanism against the revival of Buddhism, votaries of which preached anti-brahmanical doctrines to men and women at Sārnath.⁶⁰⁴ King Soma performed Rājasūya sacrifice and was consequently crowned as an illustrious ruler (so'bhiṣikto mahāteja rājā rājyebhiṣekataḥ).⁶⁰⁵ He was styled 'adhirājendra' or 'adhirāja'.⁶⁰⁶ His gold coins depict his 'abhiṣeka' on the reverse and on the obverse we find Soma (Moon) and Someśvara with legend, Śrīśa-jaya (victory to Śrī-Pati). The entire observe side of his coin depicts the performance of Jayabhiṣeka by Śaśāṅka.⁶⁰⁷

Thus, it is evident that Śaśāṅka was a great ruler devoted to the glorification of Śiva. He is mentioned to have gone to Prabhāsa⁶⁰⁸ situated

600. A.K., Ch.G., p.370.

601. Ibid., p.371.

602. A.K., Ch.G., pp.371-372.

603. Awasthi, ABL, History from the Puranas, pp.31-32.

604. Sk., IV. Kasi Khanda.

605. Sk., VII.i.20.70-73-74.

606. Ibid., VII.i.20.77.

607. History from the Puranas, pp.54-55.

608. Sk., VII.i.22.1-2.

near the sea-coast on Kṛtasmara hill, a beautiful place full of ascetics where Soma performed penances and so pleased by his devotion, Śiva appeared before him. Soma set up a Śiva-līṅga called Somanātha.⁶⁰⁹ Thus Soma, regained his prabhā by Someśvara-pratiṣṭhā at a place which was called Prabhāsa.⁶¹⁰

P.A. Mankad, the learned editor of the Aparājītapr̄cchā, observes rightly that Sutra 30 of the Apa. Pr. (Someśvara-nirṇaya) is taken from the Skanda Purāṇa.⁶¹¹

Skanda tells us that Soma and his minister (mantri), also styled Somādhyakṣa)⁶¹² came to Prabhāsa where after the performance of the sacrifice (Vāstu-yāga), Divine-architect Viśvakarmā (tvāṣṭā) accompanied by crores of other śilpiṇiś (śilpikoṭisamanvitah)⁶¹³ built a magnificent temple called Meru of white marble stones. It was surrounded by 14 other temples dedicated to Pārśva-devatas like Brahmā etc. and other 10 temples with that of Kaparddin (Śiva) at the main shrine were also built there.⁶¹⁴ Among these twentyfive shrines, the temple of Someśvara, the most exalted,⁶¹⁵ seems to be set up by Soma or Śaśāṅka in the seventh century A.D. It was called Prāsāda-rāja.

PRABHĀSA SCHOOL OF ART

Prabhāsa was a famous tīrtha of great antiquity, where Uṣavadāta performed many religious rites.⁶¹⁶ Thus Prabhāsa had established its celebrity in the early centuries of Christian era. Hence, it is not surprising if Śaśāṅka, the great devotee of Śiva, had been responsible for the construction of such magnificent temples which later on became a class by themselves.

The three strata of Somanātha temple exposed by the excavations

609. Sk., VII.i.22.3-45: Here Skanda deals with the glorification of Brāhmaṇas, gods, sacrifices and duties of kings towards Brāhmaṇas.
610. Ibid., VII.i.22.108-114.
611. cf. Sk.P., VII.i., Ch.22 and Apa. Pr. Sutra 30.1 Aparājita Pr̄cchā, CCXCVI. 38-47 deals with the glorification of the Skanda Purāṇa.
612. Ibid., VII.i.,23.24(i).
613. Ibid., VII.i.23.25-26.
614. Ibid., VII.i.24.56-64.
615. Ibid., VII.i.24.65(i):
616. Nasik Cave Ins. of Nahapāna (Sel.Ins.No.59) 11.1-2; Karle Cave Ins. of Nahapāna (Sel.Ins.No.61), 11.2-3.

are also represented by the three literary traditions embodied in the Skanda Purāṇa (the age of Saśāṅka or that of Bhoja I of Kānyakubja), Samaraṅga-nasūtradhara (age of Bhoja Paramara) and Aparājita Pr̄cchā (age of Kumārapāla). From all the three traditions, we learn that after the evolution of Śikhara about 5-6th century A.D., this particular type of temple-architecture was followed by the Silpins of Somanātha-city.

Glory that was Somanātha is represented by the Prabhāsa school of art which may be identified with the Nāgara school in its narrow sense of the term Nāgara closely associated with Prabhāsa. The account of the twentyfive temples set up around the main shrine of Somanātha (Someśvara) at Prabhāsa throws very important light on the history of Somanātha particularly on the typical characteristics features of the architecture of Somanātha temple.

Unfortunately there is very little material at the disposal of modern art critics to say about the celebrated shrine of Somanātha.⁶¹⁷ While discussing the temples of Gujrat, Percy Brown observes : "That the twelfth century saw a continuation of this architectural activity, as the country remained comparatively peaceful, and its commercial prosperity was maintained, is shown by several important buildings. Among these, the two great projects were consummated, consisting of the completion and consecration of the temple of Rudra Mala at Siddhāpur, and the further restoration of the temple of Somanātha after its spoliation by Mahmud of Ghazni in A.D. 1025. On account of their ruinous condition, however, both these famous monuments are of little help in tracing the progress of the style.... While the temple of Somanātha, having been restored, more than once, and then converted into a mosque has not much of its original fabric".⁶¹⁸ He adds: It is still possible to trace the plan of this fine structure on the banks of the Sarasvatī river, its foundations indicating an imposing conception, as with its adjacent shrines all forming part of the composition as a whole, it covered a space, 300 feet by 230 feet, the central building 150 feet long and over 100 feet wide.... It is now a crumbling and disfigured shell, deserted and desolate, a weather-beaten pile from which most of the glory has departed".⁶¹⁹

But the vast oceanic text of the Skanda Purāṇa not only refers to the

617. Coomaraswamy, HIIA, p.111.
Smith, HFAIC, p.116. He does not refer to Somanātha temple while discussing the Gujrati Architecture. Percy Brown, Indian Architecture (Buddhist & Hindu), p.143.
D.N. Shukla, HSA, pp.540,541.

618. Percy Brown, Indian Architecture (Pt.I), p.148.
619. Ibid., IA, p.149; ASI, Vol. XLV, Somanātha.

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consecration of the great Somanātha temple, but it has also preserved the plan, style and majesty of Somanātha. The observations of the modern art critic relating to its imposing conception with its adjacent shrines is fully justified by the account of Somanātha Pratiṣṭhā. Percy Brown holds that it was smaller than the Rudra Māla⁶²⁰ which comprised not more than eleven or twelve shrines.⁶²¹ The great temple of Somanātha styled Meru, Prāsāda-rāja was surrounded by twentyfour shrines.⁶²²

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620. Ibid., I.A. p.149: "Not much smaller than the Rudra Mala was the temple of Somanatha..."

621. Ibid., p.148, cf. the Gujarati-balled: To the Great Rudra eleven shrines were erected covered with gold like the Mountain of Meru.

622. Cf. St.Sk. P., Pt. IV. for further information.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.H.S.	= Ancient Historians of Sind.
A.K.Ch.G.	= Chālukyas of Gujrat by A.K. Majumdar.
A.I.	= Abberunis India (Sachau)
B.R.	= Bālā-Rāmayana - Rājasekhara.
Bhag.	= Bhāgavata Purāṇa
Bh.G.	= Bhagavad Gīta.
Cf.	= Confer.
CII	= Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum. Vols. I to 5
Ep.I.	= Epigraphica Indica.
GAMI	= Geography of Ancient and Medieval India.
HGP	= History of Gurjana Pratiharas.
Hist. Pur.	= History from the Purāṇas.
HMHI	= History of Hindu Medieval India.
Hist. Ind.	= History of India - Elloit and Dowson.
Ibid.,	= Ibidum.
Ins.	= Inscription.
Km.	= Kūrma Purāṇa.
KM	= Kāvya-Mīmāṁsā.
Kr.	= Kasi Raja Trust (Edn.)
MVC	= Mahāvīra Carita.
P.	= Purāṇa
Pdm.	= Padma Purāṇa
PRV	= Pr̥thvīrāja Vijaya
PRHRC	= Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs
SK	= Skanda Purāṇa
St. SK.P.	= Studies in Skanda Purāṇa.
St.B.F.	= Ludwig Stevnbach Felicitation Volume.
U.R.C.	= Uttara Rama Carita.
VR	= Vālmīki Rāmā�ana.

cf. St. Sk. P. , I for comprehensive Bibliography.

Pilgrimage played an important role in the making of Ancient Indian heritage. The entire country from Setu in the South of Kedara in the north was studded with tirthas. We find detailed lists of tirthas in the Puranas viz., Vamana, Kurma, Bhagavata, Garuda and Agni etc. Mahabharat list of tirthas is the most exhaustive. We find Arjuna, Balarama and others going on long tours of pilgrimage. Skanda also refers to Arjuna's pilgrimage.

The Skanda Purana describes the sacred places from the Himalaya (Kedara Khanda) to Setu-pranta. It gives a vast, representative and authoritative account of sacred places of Northern hills, Madhyadesa (Aryavarta), Purvadesa, Dakshinapatha and Pascima-desa. Uttarapatha, which was subjected to alien invasions. The reference to the sanctity of Kalapagrama and the river Sita (Tarim-Yarkando) throws light on the influence of Brahmanism in Central Asia. Similarly references to the sacred spots in Dvipantara like Katha (Keda in Malaya) in an important allusion to the expansion of Indian culture in South East Asia.

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Prof. A.B.L. Awasthi obtained B.A. Hons (History) and M.A. degrees in 1950 and 1951 respectively. He was recipient of Gold Medals for both these degrees. In 1951, he joined M.P. Degree College, Gorakhpur as Head of the History Department; in 1956 he was selected to the post of Asstt. Professor. In 1959, he joined Lucknow University as Asstt Professor/Lecturer and obtained the degrees of Ph.D. (1962) and D.Litt (1976) from the said University and rose to the position of Reader. He joined the University of Saugar (MP) as Tagore Professor and Head of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology in 1978. Even after his retirement in 1980 he has been actively engaged in writing, teaching and guiding researches.

He has to his credit more than a dozen publications; the first book having been published in 1961 under the title of "Yodheyon Ka Itihas" - the first book on the history of the heroic people of Haryana called Vira Ksetra.

